Volume Forty-Seven, Number Six, June 1969

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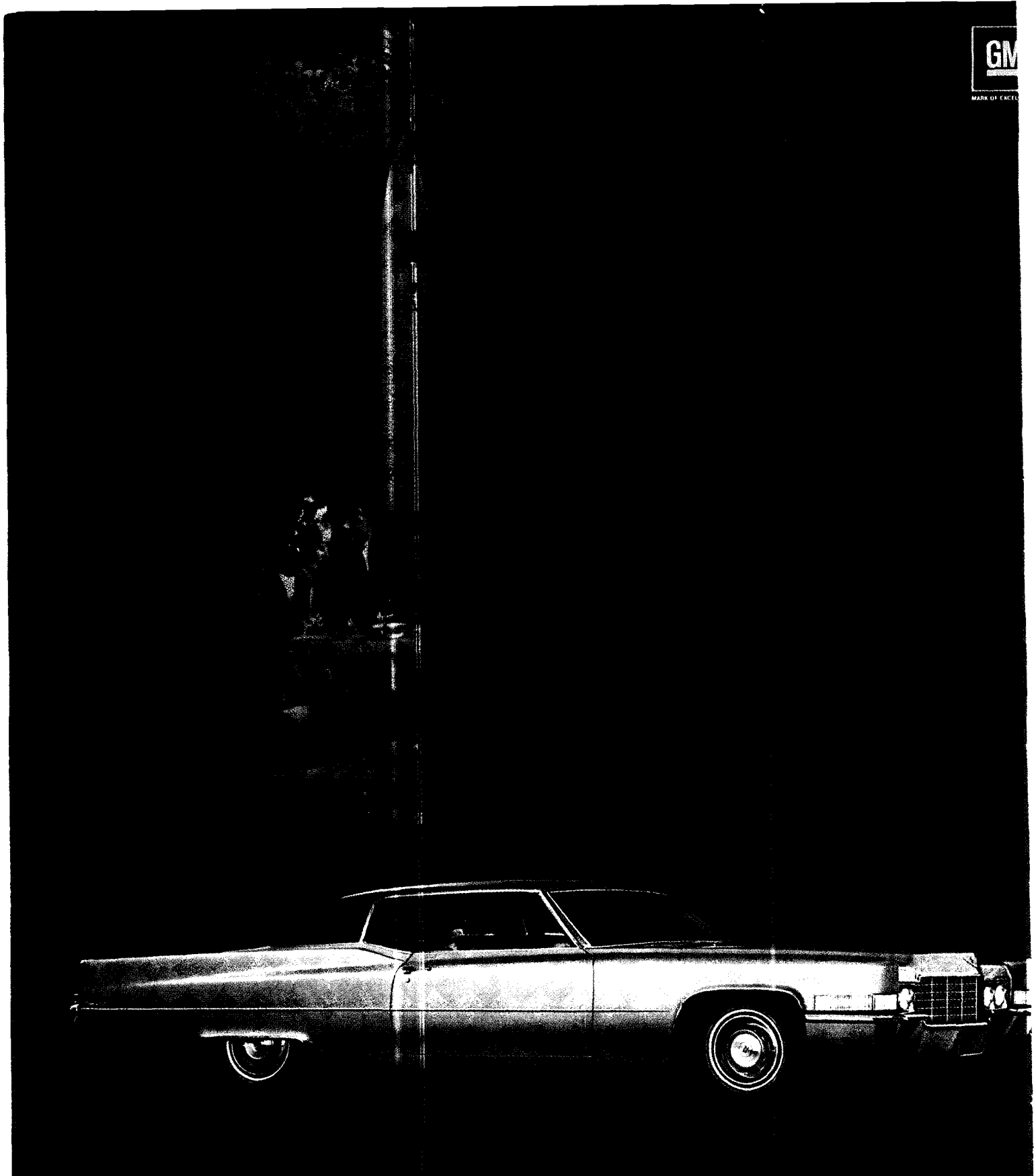

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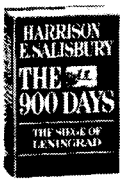

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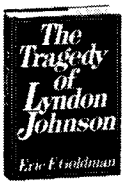

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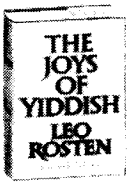

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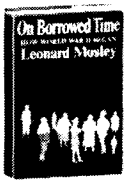

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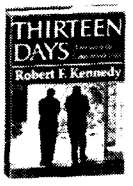

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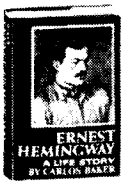

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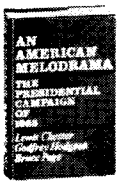

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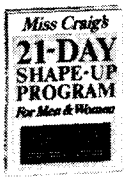

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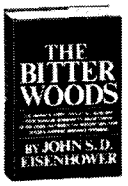

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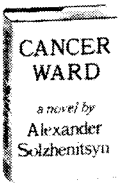

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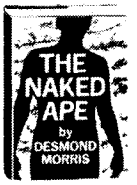

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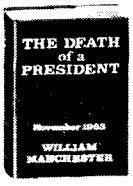

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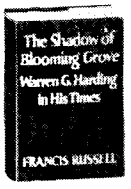

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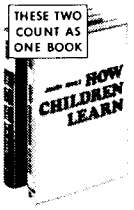

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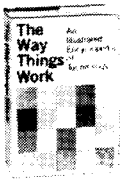

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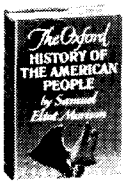

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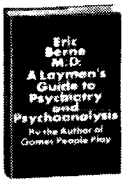

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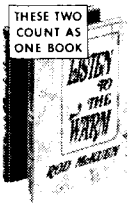

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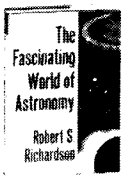

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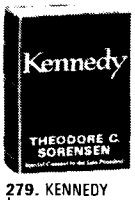

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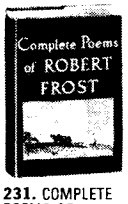

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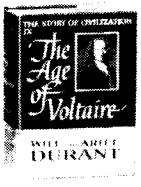

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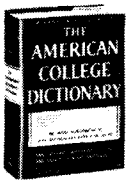

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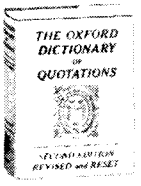

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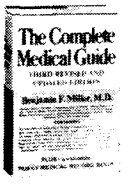

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Commentary

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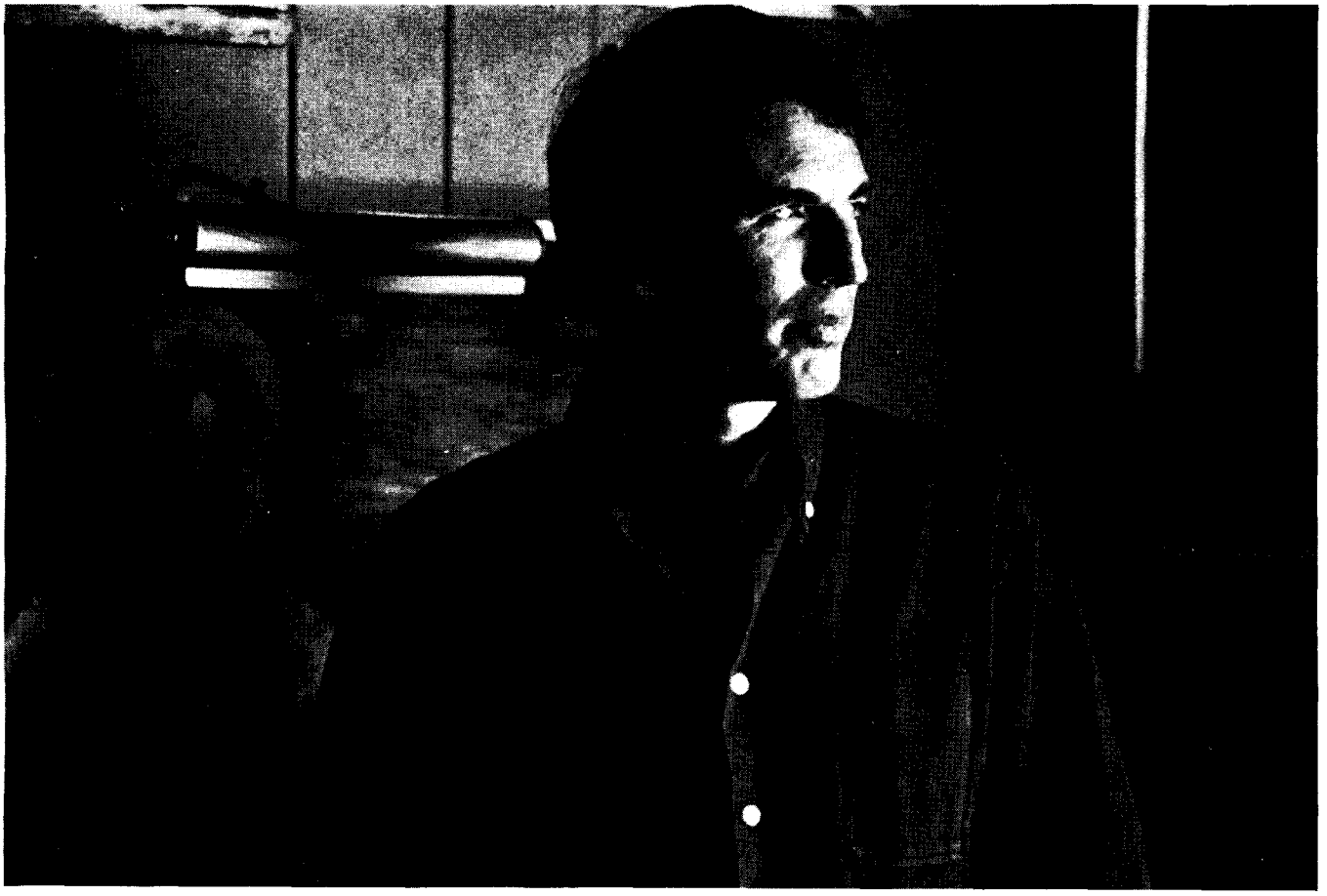

RON BUCK

HOME: Malibu, California

AGE: 39

PROFESSION: Lawyer, writer, entrepreneur.

HOBBIES: Painting, writing screen plays.

LAST BOOK READ: A Lost King.

LAST ACCOMPLISHMENT: Brought The Factory into being, Hollywood's discothèque for the important people who like to swing.

QUOTE: "Frankly, I hate the snobbery and the pretense; it's how to lose friends and not influence people. But if you're going to be in the game you might as well play as best you can."

PROFILE: Confident, successful, but still struggling for an important way to express his feelings about a frail world and its people.

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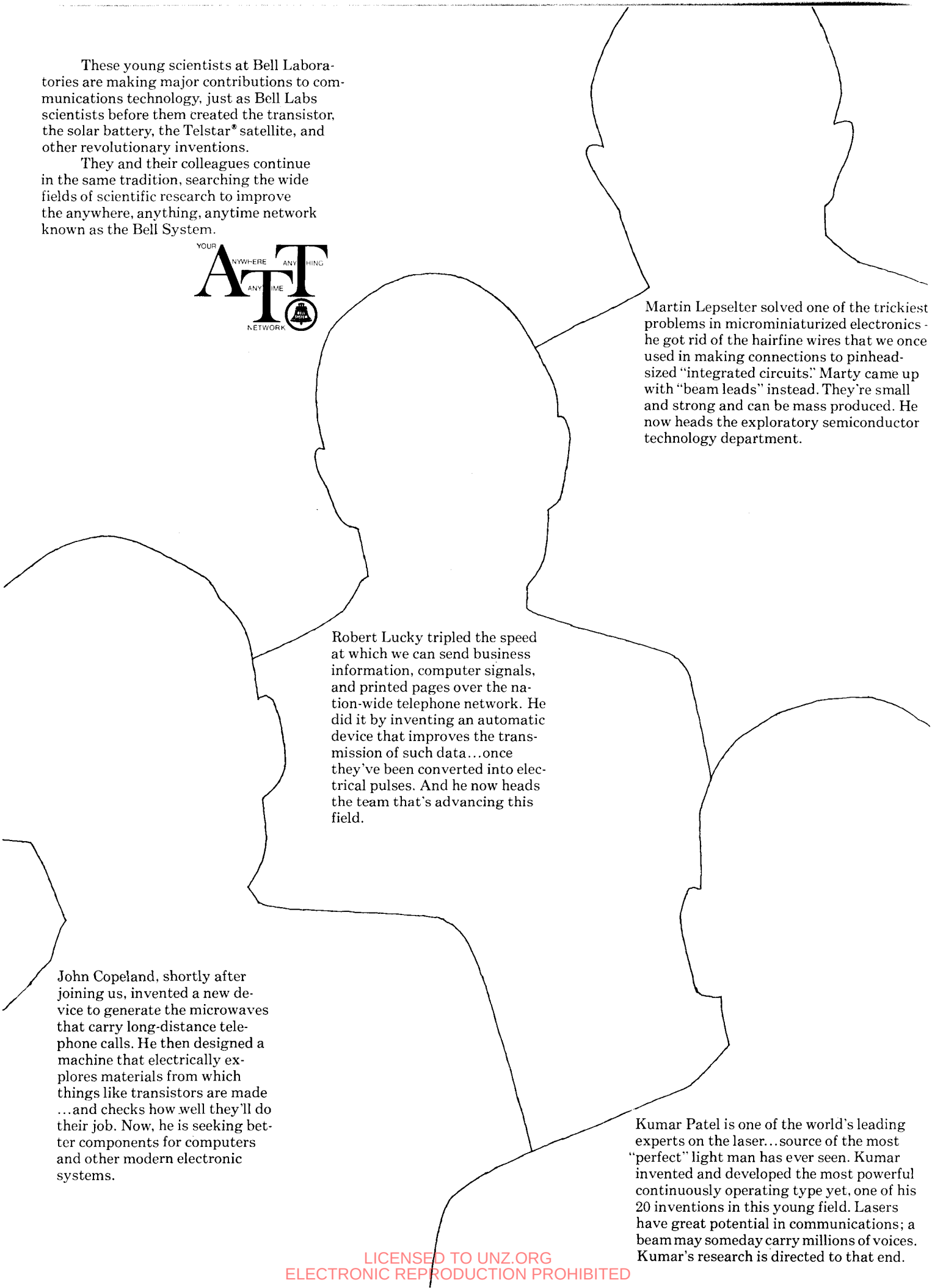

Martin Lepselter solved one of the trickiest problems in microminiaturized electronics - he got rid of the hairfine wires that we once used in making connections to pinhead-sized "integrated circuits." Marty came up with "beam leads" instead. They're small and strong and can be mass produced. He now heads the exploratory semiconductor technology department.

Robert Lucky tripled the speed at which we can send business information, computer signals, and printed pages over the nation-wide telephone network. He did it by inventing an automatic device that improves the transmission of such data...once they've been converted into electrical pulses. And he now heads the team that's advancing this field.

John Copeland, shortly after joining us, invented a new device to generate the microwaves that carry long-distance telephone calls. He then designed a machine that electrically explores materials from which things like transistors are made ...and checks how well they'll do their job. Now, he is seeking better components for computers and other modern electronic systems.

Kumar Patel is one of the world's leading experts on the laser...source of the most "perfect" light man has ever seen. Kumar invented and developed the most powerful continuously operating type yet, one of his 20 inventions in this young field. Lasers have great potential in communications; a beam may someday carry millions of voices. Kumar's research is directed to that end.

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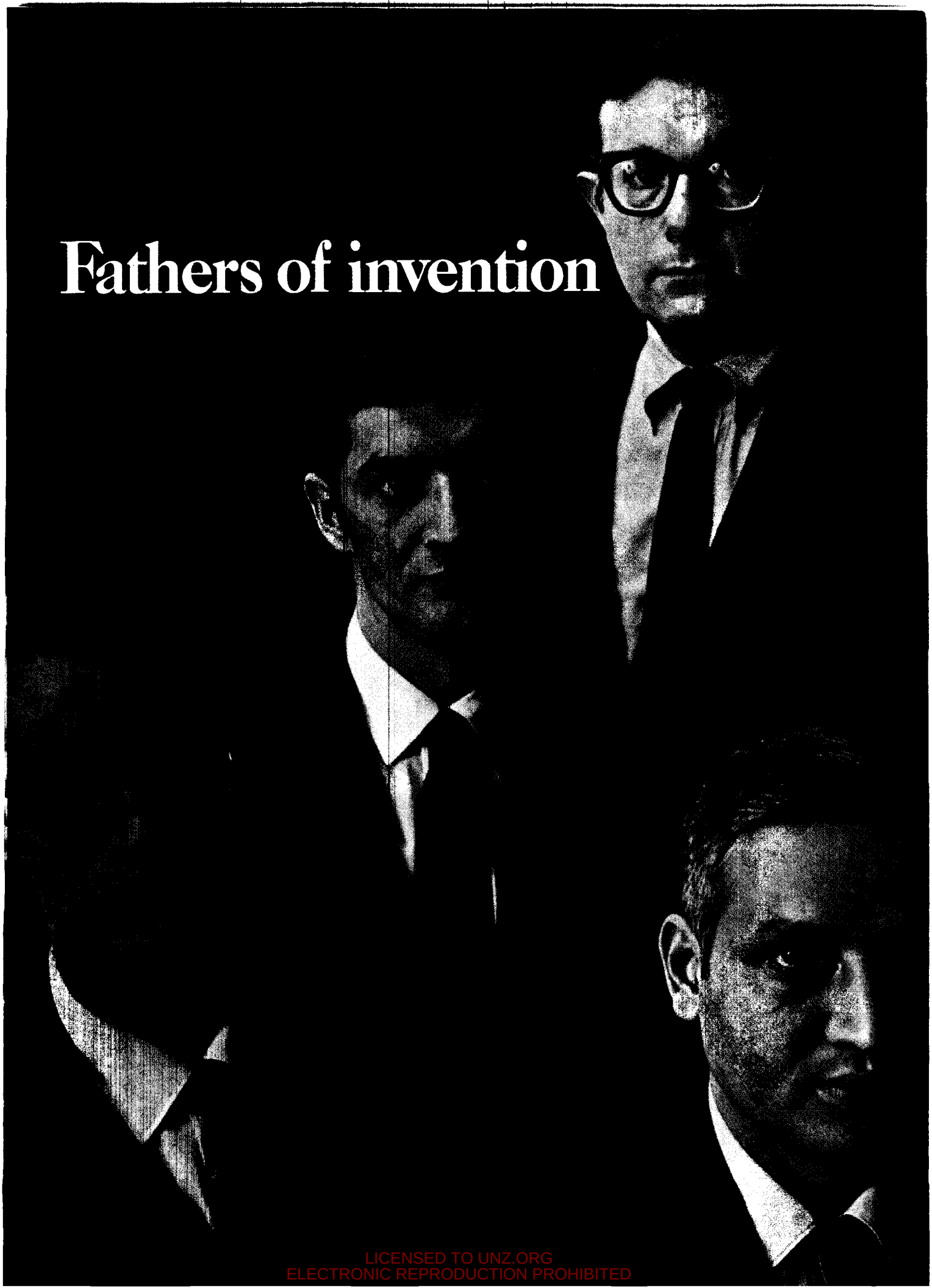
Fathers of invention



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Letters from Readers

American Jewry in Crisis?

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

This is to congratulate you on the publication of Milton Himmelfarb's "Is American Jewry in Crisis?" [March]. It was a masterful statement, which I would not want to see changed by as much as a word. . . .

To the Jewish apologist, I would like to ask: what do you gain by "understanding" or even justifying anti-Semitic statements? . . . You may agree or disagree about the extent of anti-Semitism among blacks; you may agree or disagree with the positions, among others, of some individual Jews and Jewish organizations. But what do you gain by not speaking out against statements which are clearly anti-Semitic, or, if you would rather have it said in this manner, which clearly bring "Jew" into the merits of a controversy when "Jew" is not logically necessary? What gain do you find for yourself or for blacks when you apply standards toward statements by blacks which you would not apply toward statements by Jews? . . .

I think the point should be clear: no matter what the motivation or social purpose, there are certain things one does not do. One does not run down blacks as blacks. One does not run down Jews as Jews.

LEONARD S. SANDWEISS
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Congratulations to Milton Himmelfarb for his trenchant article. . . . For too long Jews have been admiring the stroke of their oppressors . . . or have been willing to tolerate the vituperation of their adversaries. Why do we owe patience, understanding, and empathy to anyone who seeks to do us harm? . . .

HOWARD ALTSTEIN
Champaign, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Why does Mr. Himmelfarb imply that it is all right to take up arms for our defense, yet deny us the right to use ammunition? Of course the "ethnics" are not going to fight for Jewish survival, but it is obvious that they themselves, together with the middle class and organized labor, see the threat and in many cases are more disturbed about it than we are. Roosevelt and Churchill sided with Stalin because it was expedient; Hitler allied Germany with Japan because it was expedient. Why must we Jews be like a tiny island in the middle of the ocean, forever bucking the waves yet never really stopping them? . . .

BERYL MOSOR
Brookline, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Backlash is ugly enough, but when Mr. Himmelfarb suggests that Jewish voters align themselves with the most conservative elements of our society in their own "self-interest," backlash becomes lunacy. As a Jew, I do not perceive that abandoning my liberal and humanistic traditions is in my own "best interests." Joining repressive elements in their attack on black calls for justice can only result in unleashing forces that ultimately (and historically) turn against Jews.

The hysterical overreaction of the Jewish Establishment to a handful of anti-Semitic incidents, incidents that are all the more isolated for their being unrepresentative, leads one to suspect the motives. Are our "professional Jews" attempting to use the imagined threat of black anti-Semitism as a lever to perpetuate their own organizations and their own power? . . .

D. S. DAVIS
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Milton Himmelfarb's article would be more to the point were it entitled "In Defense of the Liberalism of American Jewry." Indeed, he implies as much in his opening paragraph when he writes: ". . . I have found it necessary to praise the Jews to Jews. By praise I mean defend. The defense has been [is] against the accusation, undeterred by mere fact, that American Jews have become selfishly conservative, or downright reactionary." One cannot help but agree that Jews are in need of praise by Jews. And defense attorney Milton Himmelfarb makes a good case for Jewish liberalism within the framework he selects. But the question, is American Jewry in crisis?, never really gets considered.

At the same time many of the

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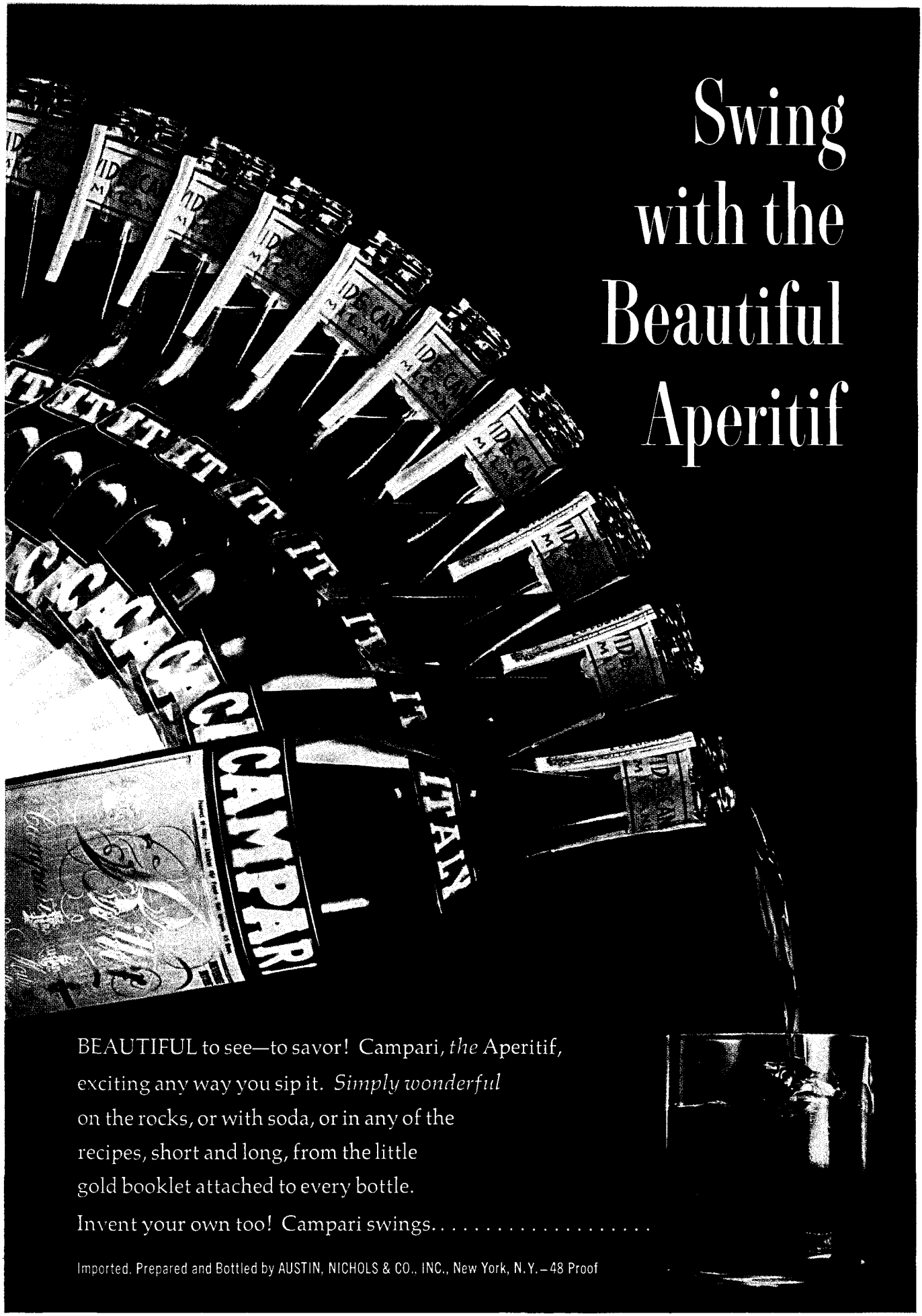

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facts which Mr. Himmelfarb cites to support the claim of Jewish liberalism have a bearing on the more basic question of the position of Jews in the U.S. The general problem arises from the fact that Jews, who in terms of wealth, economic activity, and education are more closely allied with conservatives, nevertheless continue to support what they believe to be the more liberal candidates, policies, and practices. As Mr. Himmelfarb notes, this has left Jews without allies, though he seems to think this is one more instance of anti-Jewish feeling rather than further evidence of the breakdown of American liberalism.

Jews vote like Negroes but have no political alliance with the growing black community (almost five times as large as the Jewish minority); on the contrary, instead of collaboration one can look for greater estrangement between the two groups. Similarly, Jews vote like labor but have few strictly labor interests and can count on labor support for specifically Jewish concerns only in very special circumstances. . . . And, of most importance, Jews strongly support the State of Israel even to the point of interventionism at a time when most Americans are indifferent to the fate of Israel, above all else want peace in the Middle East, and are tending toward nonintervention in general. In a word, what is most significant about the position of Jews in the U.S. today is that it tends toward political isolation.

The problem therefore is not to defend Jewish liberalism, which in the past was a part of the mainstream of the American political revolution ushered in by the New Deal, but to comprehend the growing Jewish political isolation today and deal with the dangers which accompany it in a period when the American majority is moving to the right of center. Given this situation, it would seem that the obvious answer is that Jews should also move to the right. Mr. Himmelfarb hints at that answer when he asks: "Why did I contribute to that 81 per cent [Jewish vote for Humphrey] the last time out? Would 70 or 75 per cent not have been liberal enough?"

Two things are wrong with this simple antidote. First, Jewish liberalism, as Mr. Himmelfarb's data suggest, has deep roots and will not be easily renounced to meet some prescription for security. Second, the trend toward conservatism, whose limits are by no means visible, is itself a danger to Jews to which they would only be adding were they to give it support.

This brief letter is hardly the place to analyze the forces destroying American liberalism, but at least it should be recognized that, taking into account the nature of the Jewish predicament, Jews have a special need to make liberalism viable. Though it is the right and obligation of Jews to pursue Jewish interests, those can never be wholly separated from a democratic and open society. Jewish liberalism cannot stand alone, crushed between the complacent majority on the Right and the frenetic minority on the Left. If Jewry is not in crisis now, the chance that it will face a crisis in the future is—if American liberalism should continue to deteriorate—indeed very great.

DAVID DANZIG
Columbia University School of Social Work
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I will not attempt to comment on the general thesis advanced by Milton Himmelfarb. But there ought to be a response to his sneering reference to "the Jewish-label civil-liberties outfit [which] is busy protecting us against—against a Christmas stamp with the archangel Gabriel from Jan van Eyck's 'Annunication,' and a lottery ticket with a menorah and Shield of David." The implication is that the "outfit" in question, presumably the American Jewish Congress, is doing nothing else and particularly nothing about the crisis which Mr. Himmelfarb is discussing. That is utter nonsense, unless you assume that all the Jewish organizations should drop everything they are doing, including defense of religious liberty, to deal with this one problem.

Readers of COMMENTARY, including Mr. Himmelfarb, should know that the religious design of the Christmas stamp was protested not only by the American Jewish Congress but by all the organizations in the National Community Relations Advisory Council and the Synagogue Council of America, including the American Jewish Committee, the Anti-Defamation League, and the rabbinical and congregational bodies of all three branches of Judaism.

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Mr. Himmelfarb has been expressing for years his disagreement with the prevailing view in the Jewish community on the importance of maintaining separation of church and state. But the fact that we are all out of step with him does not mean that we are not protecting Jewish interests.

JOSEPH B. ROBISON
Commission on Law
& Social Justice
American Jewish Congress
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . In New York City, and in the Middle East, Jews today enjoy what (knowing Mr. Himmelfarb's predilection for Latinisms) I would call an unquestionable *plenitas potestatis*. The Jews are, in these two regions, powerful, and almost unchallengeably so. Their power has not been acquired by accident. . . . It has, rather, been acquired as a result of a deliberate and determined resolve to do so; the reconstitution of Jewish life on the basis of power (both within the Jewish world itself and in terms of the Jewish-Gentile confrontation) is *the* revolutionary transformation of modern Jewish history; it is this that was meant by the objective of "normalizing" the Jewish people.

We Jews (if I may be allowed to indulge in the old I. F. Stone trick) have normalized ourselves. The great mass of Jews seems to be exhilarated by this turn of events: now *we* can persecute and exploit rather than be the objects of persecution and exploitation, and even as we do this we can cover our flanks by hiding behind the sufferings we endured in the past. . . . A few Jews, on the other hand, and I often get the feeling that they are pitifully few, reject "normalcy" and, like Moses when he came down from Mt. Sinai and saw the people dancing round the Golden Calf, stubbornly insist that it is indeed possible for the whole army to be out of step.

Other Jews, however, fall between these two extremes: Himmelfarb evidently is one of them. Such Jews acclaim our new normalcy, but somehow cannot be entirely reconciled to it. They want to be "normal" but at the same time recognize that this desire leads them to betray their Jewish inheritance. They are not prevented by this recognition from continuing in their betrayal, but they feel guilty. Indulging in the exercise of power, some lurking, lingering suspicion that this is not altogether a nice Jewish thing to do nevertheless continues to haunt them. And so they dream up fantastic conspiracies to prove that they are still being persecuted and, by becoming so terribly exercised with this figment of their own imagination, retain a tenuous hold on the Jewishness which they have rejected, but not altogether without a qualm. . . .

MICHAEL SELZER
The City University of New York
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Two of Mr. Himmelfarb's points call for further comment.

On quotas vs. merit: it is possible and technically simple to provide preferential weightings to Negro candidates, within a merit system, without either unduly undermining it, or introducing pernicious quotas. Presumably in the public interest, veterans are now given point handicaps on many civil-service tests. For parallel reasons, Negroes might also be given preferences on some merit examinations. . . . Such a policy, while clearly discriminatory in favor of one racial group, would not seriously disadvantage other groups, Jews included, as long as no quotas were set, and the point handicaps were held to reasonable levels.

On the implication of anti-Semitism by Brandeis blacks organizing themselves as Malcolm X University: Jews are, and should be, sensitive to anti-Semitism wherever they find it, and to Jewish eyes it fairly leaps from the pages of Malcolm's autobiography, along with assorted racial nonsense. I have no private pipeline to the black subconscious, but Malcolm's anti-Semitism is not, I wager, the message that "sends" young blacks. It is, rather, his strident and defiant racial pride . . . which arouses young Negroes. . . .

MORTON CLURMAN
Croton-on-Hudson, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

At the risk of having Milton Himmelfarb dismiss me as one of those "Jewish universalists" who blindly "understand" and explain away the perils confronting them, may I suggest that his article on black anti-Semitism is disturbing in more ways than he perhaps intended? Of course Jews have every reason, as he indicates, to be anx-

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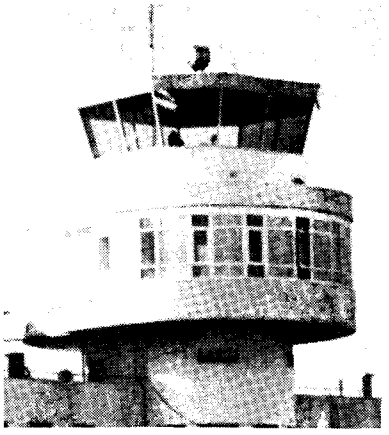

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ious about anti-Semitism! Of course it must not be overlooked, no matter where it makes its appearance. Anti-Semitism, as anyone who can remember the 30's and 40's must know, is a frightfully serious matter. But that is precisely why its extent and location must be defined with the utmost care. Given the fears waiting to be born, anything less can be dangerously provocative. Black activism must not be made to seem synonymous with anti-Semitism. In Mr. Himmelfarb's article, however, I'm afraid it frequently is.

One instance: after observing that Malcolm X "was an anti-Semite," he notes that the "one thing no one remarked on when the black students occupied that building at Brandeis—not even the parochial Jews, so accepted has it all become—is the new name under which those students organized themselves: Malcolm X University." Since this is his only mention of the Brandeis event, it conveys the impression that the seizure of Ford Hall was an anti-Semitic demonstration. That's bad enough—but what really jars is the implication created by the surrounding context. The comment is embedded in a paragraph on Herman B. Ferguson, who has advocated organizing black education around the gun and has been indicted for conspiracy to commit murder. One need not be a "Jewish universalist" to realize that this method of discussion is downright inflammatory. . . .

As one who was on campus almost constantly during the Ford Hall occupation, let me make it clear that everything said and done in those ten days urges the conclusion that the name chosen by the black students was intended to symbolize black aspiration, even black militancy, but not what Mr. Himmelfarb suspects, anti-Semitism. . . .

ARTHUR EDELSTEIN
Brandeis University
Waltham, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Mr. Himmelfarb fails to distinguish between black militants who adhere to the non-violent approach (shall we say "responsible" militants) and those who do not ("extremists"); between black (self-appointed) spokesmen and black Americans in general; between radicals who retain their Jewish identity and those who do not; and so on. . . .

Mr. Himmelfarb concentrates on the problem of black anti-Semitism, and demonstrates that he is cognizant of those studies which find that anti-Semites are a minority among black Americans. But he rejects these findings. Why?—because the author of one of these studies allegedly concluded that "Jews are incredibly paranoid." I don't know who that social scientist is and I don't care. I do know, however, that every study that I have seen has concluded that black Americans are less anti-Semitic than white Americans. . . .

CHAIM I. WAXMAN
Department of Sociology
Central Connecticut State College
New Britain, Connecticut

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Mr. Himmelfarb seems to be proposing that Jews should "vote their self-interest," i.e., vote with the right wing, abandoning their traditional liberalism and concern for the (black) underdog. Indeed, in reading his article I sometimes had the impression that he advocated that we "get the blacks." . . . I certainly do not believe Jews ought to indulge in the masochistic game of "Yes, yes, we're bad, hit us again!" We ought not, as some Jews have done, endorse the position of black anti-Semites that Jewish exploitation is the root of black misery. But neither can we deny that ghetto blacks are exploited by ghetto merchants, and that large numbers of ghetto merchants are Jewish. . . . One reason ghetto merchants are Jewish is that the ghettos were Jewish before they were black, and the Jewish merchants simply "hung on" after their clientele changed. One reason ghetto merchants "exploit" is that their businesses are marginal: profits are low, costs are high, and so they are forced to charge higher prices than larger retailers. Finally, though, it must be said that there is a kind of "exploitation," however unintended, in the fact that white merchants collect their profits in the black ghettos but spend them in white communities.

. . . There is probably an additional reason why blacks have chosen to direct an increasingly larger part of their rage specifically

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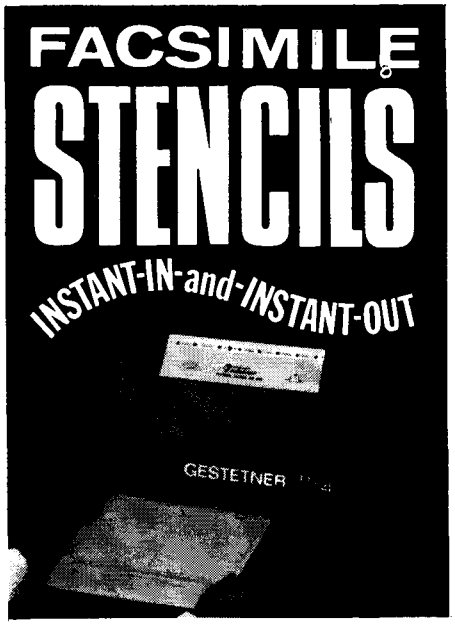

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against Jews. It is that Jews are too often, and quite unfairly, held up to blacks as an example of how a discriminated-against ethnic minority, initially poor and ignorant of the ways of America, nevertheless "made it" in American society. . . . It is bitter indeed to observe another persecuted minority that did succeed in America, to observe the fruits of its success, to be compared constantly with it and found wanting, and to know that the route to success is closed to oneself.

What, then, is to be done about black anti-Semitism? I suggest that it is no solution to join the fascists in putting down the blacks. I suggest that Jews should speak out and tear to shreds the flimsy arguments of black anti-Semites on every possible occasion. I suggest that, fundamentally, the problem of black anti-Semitism will not be solved until the causes of black rage are removed. The best counter, therefore, to black anti-Semitism is to go on with the work we've been doing—go on working with blacks or parallel to blacks to eradicate white racism, to open up opportunities for economic advancement and residential dispersal, to reform or revolutionize the abysmal public education system.

In the meantime, it seems to me that the time for Jewish merchants in the black ghettos is past. Whether or not black ownership of marginal ghetto businesses is going to improve the economic position of the black community is not the issue. Probably it will not; but even if such ownership . . . does not change the economic situation of blacks substantially, they should have the right to try. . . .

The time for Jewish merchants in the black ghettos is past also because as long as they remain, they will retain their special visibility and thus continue to be the scapegoats for black rage and black frustration. I do not see my advocacy of a withdrawal from the ghetto as "placating" or even "rewarding" black anti-Semitism. Black anti-Semitism is detestable, and should not be rewarded. Jewish ghetto merchants are *not* the cause of black misery, and Jewish withdrawal from ghetto businesses should *not* be seen as a tacit acknowledgment that "Jewish exploitation" is a root cause of the blacks' troubles. But nothing good is accomplished by Jewish merchants remaining in the ghetto. If they leave, one stimulus to black anti-Semitism would be removed. . . .

Efforts on the part of the American Jewish community to accomplish the peaceful transition from white to black ownership of ghetto enterprises should go a long way toward constructively *removing*, not mollifying, the causes of black anti-Semitism. . . .

EVALYN F. SEGAL
Center for Urban Studies
University of Illinois
Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Mr. Himmelfarb is right on target in his attack on apologists for anti-Semitism, Jewish and otherwise. But I think we must not take the present noise among the militants for an anti-Semitic movement among blacks. The ethnic targets vary with the locality. Across the river in Newark black students last year were writing "Kill the Wops" on school walls. And to me, "honkie" sounds suspiciously like American slang for an East European laborer.

As recently as a year ago a CBS survey found no more than 4 per cent of Negroes in the country as a whole supporting the best-known militant leader (Stokely Carmichael). Roy Wilkins drew about eight times as much support from Negroes as H. Rap Brown.

While applauding Mr. Himmelfarb's polemic against the tolerators of black anti-Semitism, I don't share his alarm. The tactic of talking revolution but attacking only those already on your side (liberals, Jews, intellectuals) is unlikely to recruit a large number of adherents to the cause. While ethnic minorities may stand in the path of some middle-class Negroes, the quarrel of the poor is with the centers of power not with its periphery. Such an attack the militants have scrupulously avoided, standing aside both from Chicago and the Poor People's Campaign.

And while we are at it, let us set the record straight on Mr. Himmelfarb's claims as a prophet. He mentions a conference on anti-Semitism at which he "was a guest" and at which he expressed doubts concerning the findings. As the principal author of the study *(Jews in the Mind of America)* on which the conference was based, I can assure you that Mr. Himmelfarb was present not as a guest but as a member of the advisory committee on the analysis of poll data which, in the words of the Executive Vice-President of the American

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"When you first sit in the TC it brings out a certain excitement."[15] "In the 2000's interior, the car's individuality is as clear as in the handling and ride. There's a definite English feeling about the surroundings, with proper leather ...used as you would expect."[16]

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"Another touch, one we'd applaud in *any* car, is the pair of drop-down bins under each side of the dash that serve as storage space and as the best knee protection in a crash that we've seen."[22] "The seats themselves, both front and back, fit like a glove providing maximum comfort."[23]

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1-25 "And this is the Torah which Moses set before the Children of Israel." Torah wrapper detail. 1812. Full color on white; matching env.
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9-25 "Behold thou art betrothed to me..." Wedding detail from embroidered Torah wrapper. German. 1749. Full color on white; matching envelope.
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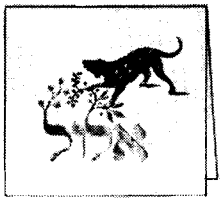

12-25 Decoration of Elul, last month of the Jewish year. Detail from embroidered Torah wrapper. German. 1812. Full color on white; matching env.
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47-25 "Strong as a lion." A segment from a Torah wrapper, silk embroidered with golden thread on linen, 1762.
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38-25 The upper portion of an Omer Calendar, written and painted on parchment, ca. 1780, and once owned by Moses Mendelssohn.
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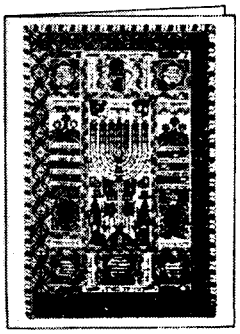

29-35 A cabbalistic drawing, probably used as a mizrach, an ornamental charm hung on the east wall of a home, ca. 1820-30. Drawn and painted on paper.
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FROM THE ROTHSCHILD MANUSCRIPT

34-25 Prayer recited as the Torah is taken from the Ark.
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32-35 "The Ethics of the Fathers." The opening chapter of Pirke Abot.
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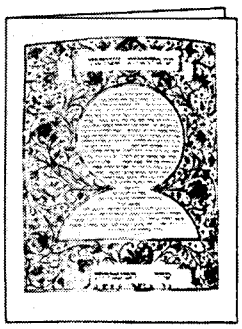

36-35 An illuminated page concerning preparations for the New Year.
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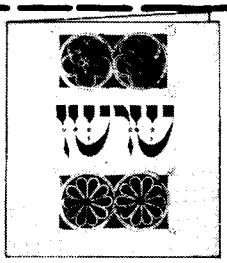

21-25 "Shoshan" – the lily symbolizing Israel. Illumination of the initial word of a poem for the Day of Atonement. Rhine Valley, ca. 1380.
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51-25 Ben Shahn: The Fourth Commandment. Kennedy Galleries, New York.
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53-25 Adam and Eve. European, early 19th century. Central Synagogue, New York.
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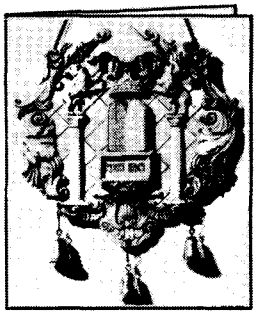

52-25 Torah breastplate. Ivory and bone. European. 17th century. Harry G. Friedman Collection, The Jewish Museum.
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54-35 Chaim Gross: Holidays. Water color. Forum Gallery.
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56-25 Mosaic from the floor of the synagogue at Hamman Lif, Tunisia. 5th century The Brooklyn Museum.
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57-25 Harry Lieberman: The Jewish Holidays. Oil on canvas. Morris Gallery, New York City.
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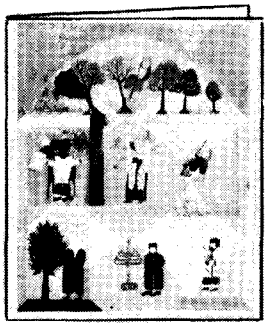

63-25 Embossing of the Sh'ma prayer based on a metal plaque of the 19th century in the Harry G. Friedman Collection of the Jewish Museum.
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58-25 Feast of Drawing the Water. It is written in the Mishnah that one who has not seen the ceremony of drawing of water has not seen happiness in his lifetime. Silk and metal on taffeta. Venice, 18th century. Cooper-Hewitt Museum of Design, Smithsonian Institution.
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61-35 Stones of the Wailing Wall, Jerusalem. Detail. Photograph by Zev Radovan.
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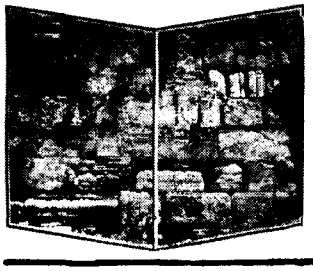

27-35 Left: Adam and Eve. Right: Noah releases the dove. From a miniature book of daily prayers. Central Europe, 1803.
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59-25 Mizrach. Paper cut-out and colored. Poland, 1868. YIVO Institute of Jewish Research.
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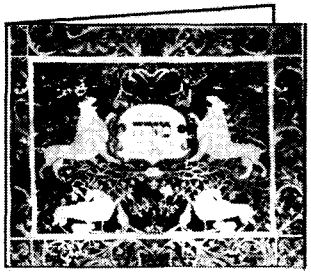

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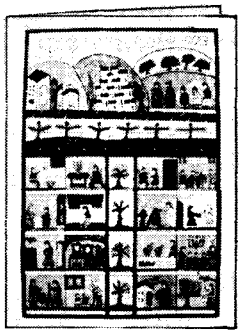

31-25 Beginning of the section of S'lichot (penitential prayers for the ten day period between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur).
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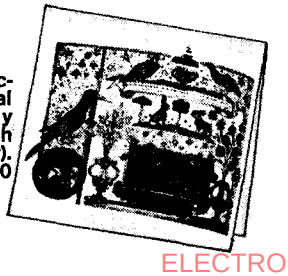

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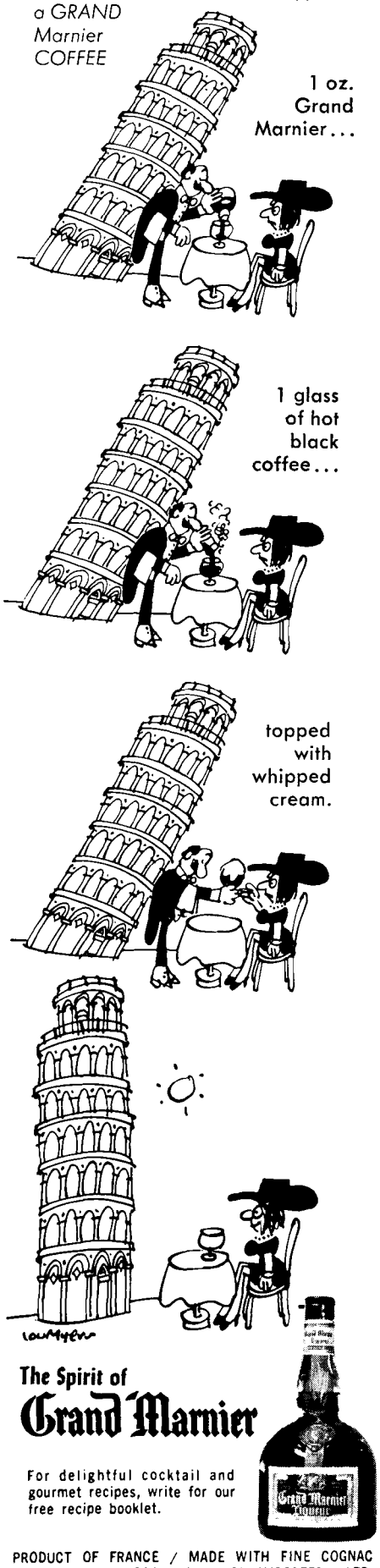

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Jewish Committee, "scrutinized the original drafts, supplied additional information, and often suggested interpretations that gave meaning to obscure findings."

Mr. Himmelfarb was of enormous help to my study and at no time in the many meetings I had with the advisory committee over a two-year period did he express skepticism that anti-Semitism had indeed declined. Neither did he voice doubts concerning the meaning of the assembled data. Moreover, the report of the conference, while discussing at length the doubts of some others, nowhere includes Mr. Himmelfarb among the doubters.

My guess, of course, is that Mr. Himmelfarb's record as a prophet would have been better served had he not tried to dissociate himself from conclusions with which he concurred at the time. These findings—that anti-Semitism among Americans has declined massively since the war—are in no way vitiated by the present posture of some Negro militants. One might even guess that if the Jews were not so firmly entrenched and accepted in the society, it is most unlikely that they would have been selected as an appropriate target for anti-white hostility.

CHARLES HERBERT STEMBER
Department of Sociology
Rutgers University
New Brunswick, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Yes, American Jewry is in crisis, in no small part because of such over-reaction and under-imagination as are found in Mr. Himmelfarb's article. One can only hope that his article will not be cited as "the Jewish rhetoric" in the same unscientific and overgeneralizing way that Himmelfarb quotes *the* blacks.

The Jews have to make a stand, argues Himmelfarb. Our Straits of Tiran are being blockaded and damned if we're going to act like *golus Yidn*. Nasser has guns, bombers too. Leslie Campbell? Who knows what weapons are cached throughout black America? I've heard from a friend that. . . .

What is the evidence for the assertion that we must make a stand? Himmelfarb suggests that we are soft and "they" know it. Why else is education the field upon which the blacks launch their attack? That we are soft? Merely look at the voting record. If that doesn't satisfy, there's Izzy Stone and all the other anti-Jewish Jews, and Jewish civil libertarians who defend unto death procedural justice, except when Jewish teachers are involved. These are all good points. and we learn once again that Jewishness takes perverse forms in America.

But to assert that we are in danger because our weaknesses are known to them, and that is why "they" make an issue of educational policy rather than "employment policy or agricultural policy or housing policy or anything silly like that" is either transparent sophistry or is itself another example of American Jewish perversity. It is certainly obvious that of the alternatives suggested by Himmelfarb none is as available to politically effective action as education. Even where the enemy teachers are not Jews, in cities like Los Angeles or Boston, education is the focus of black militant demands.

And the merit system—which, "to hear some people talk these days, one would think . . . is a Jewish conspiracy." Of course it is not a conspiracy—but it *did* function to advance Jews, and it *does* function to exclude blacks. What are the choices? Fight the blacks and keep our hard-fought gains, or give up and be suckers once again?

We *are* suckers if we accept these as the choices, which Mr. Himmelfarb seems to do. It should be clear that competition for scarce resources will prevail until the scarcity itself is eliminated. All of the energy (hysterical, outraged, or otherwise) which is being turned against the blacks should be directed toward the Establishment Himmelfarb describes. *They* should be the target, not because of imagined backroom anti-Semitic machinations, but because of their inaction on the real need to enlarge the economic and social pie. If there are WASPS who favor decentralization and community control in order to avoid increasing educational resources, we should fight them—and discuss decentralization on its own merits. If WASPS are sacrificing Jewish college admissions in favor of blacks, without touching the athletes, alumni sons, or anyone else, then we Jews should be screaming about that, not about the increased opportunities for blacks.

To our knowledge power politics is not particularly un-Jewish. Self-defense is no crime. And yes, there are some Jews, especially young people, who ought to be at

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least as sensitive to the humanity of their own people as they are to that of blacks. But those young people are not frightened—and they will not accept an older Jewish community which is only frightened. They cannot be enlisted into a struggle for mere survival—not when it begins to look as though there were no particular *raison d'être* anymore. So a defensive survival strategy, while it might be successful in the short run, would ultimately be self-defeating.

Mr. Himmelfarb would like to "examine the credentials of the doctors who brusquely diagnose our complaint as hysteria." We have no particular credentials: we would like to be Jewish, but not in Mr. Himmelfarb's way. We are hoping that organized Jewry will provide other ways, and we are all working with in those structures to bring such new ways into being. Sometimes it seems impossible. Himmelfarb discourages us.

JUDITH MAGIDSON
LINDA ROSE
DAVID GELLER
LINDA ACKERMAN

[*The writers are members of the staff of the American Jewish Committee; their letter represents their personal views.*]

MR. HIMMELFARB writes:

I wish what Mr. Danzig says did not remind me of what Masaryk said: "In Czechoslovakia there are Czechs and there are Slovaks. Only the Jews are Czechoslovaks." The Czechs and the Slovaks remain, the Jewish Czechoslovaks have passed into history. In the United States Mr. Danzig sees a complacent majority on the Right and a frenetic minority on the Left, with Jewish liberalism, or liberal Jews, bound to be crushed between the two unless the Jews succeed in making liberalism viable. The United States has more than two hundred million people. Fewer than six million of them are Jews.

I like Mr. Davis's letter. In the midst of so much change and transience, it is a comfort that some things abide. *Vulgärmarxismus*, for instance.

I like Mr. Robison's letter, too. Convicting me of having long expressed "disagreement with the prevailing view in the Jewish community," he spares me the necessity of explaining to Mr. Davis that my job as mercenary propagandist for a cynical Jewish establishment is only part-time. Besides, these days we can use a laugh, and Mr. Robison's "defense of religious liberty" is good for at least a giggle. So is the suggestion that the other Jewish organizations were as zealous as his for the holy war against stamp and lottery ticket.

To Mr. Selzer we are indebted for earlier lessons about the Israelis' absolute corruption by absolute power. Now we learn from him that equally in New York "the Jews are . . . powerful . . . almost unchallengeably so . . . not . . . by accident . . . rather . . . as a result of a deliberate and determined resolve. . . ." That is marvelously sinister and sends delicious quivers of excitement through you. Mr. Selzer must have his reasons for not trusting us with a few more details, but I wish he would reconsider. It is unkind of him, tantalizing us like that with hints.

Mr. Selzer does confide that he is like Moses, in strictness about golden calves. The resemblance does not end there. "The man Moses," likewise, "was very humble, more than any other man on earth." And Mr. Selzer understands English (and statistical tables) just as well as Moses. In statistical words of one syllable I showed how the Jews are unique: at the top of the group ladder in average income and education but voting with the Puerto Ricans and Mexicans at the bottom of the ladder. For Mr. Selzer this means that Jews now exult in—*blech!*—"'normalcy.'" It means that "now *we* can persecute and exploit."

Mr. Clurman proposes something like veterans' points for Negroes taking civil-service examinations. That is worth discussing, but Mr. McCoy and the Rev. Mr. Oliver have not asked for veterans' points. They have denounced the merit system as such, and their white supporters have not disagreed. As to Malcolm X, my quarrel is less with the young Negroes he inspires than with the whites, and especially Jews, who cannot help being aware of Malcolm's anti-Semitism but pretend to be unaware. I have heard that by some in the white, young (and not altogether non-Jewish) New Left, Malcolm's icon is venerated with those of Che, Ho, and Mao.

Jews used to know that America was different in at least this respect, that no significant American hero or teacher had been an anti-Semite. In Germany, from before Luther to after Treitschke,

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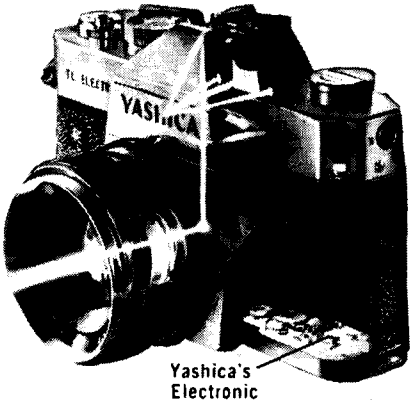

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there was a tradition of anti-Semitic teaching by the great (or ponderous); similarly in France, where Voltaire himself was serviceable; but not in the United States. Here anti-Semites had to forge the anti-Semitic statements they attributed to Benjamin Franklin. Now Malcolm lessens the difference for Jews between America and Europe.

With Mr. Edelstein, too, I agree that Malcolm's anti-Semitism is not what interests the young black nationalists most. For the rest, Mr. Edelstein's interpretation of the purpose and effect of what I wrote about the Brandeis ruckus and about Herman B. Ferguson is ingenious, and I suppose it would be unreasonable to expect accuracy in the bargain. Is it not curious that Mr. Edelstein has Mr. Ferguson *indicted* for conspiracy to murder, when I wrote that Ferguson had been convicted? The class of people to which Mr. Edelstein says he belongs know how to avoid admitting certain things to consciousness.

Speaking of Brandeis, I commend to Mr. Edelstein what his colleague Ben Halpern wrote in *Midstream* for February (which I had not yet read when I said no one had remarked on the use of Malcolm's name at Brandeis): "A direct discussion of issues between Negroes and Jews rather than Negroes and academicians . . . would have cut to the heart of the dispute at once . . . faculty action on the nationalist program was based on faculty restatements of the essence of the demands in forms they found academically acceptable. . . . The first consequence was an explosion of catcalls and vituperation from the Brandeis Afro-American Society. 'Lies! Lies! Lies!' . . . None of this need have happened, if it were possible . . . for some members of the Brandeis faculty to approach the black demands first as Jews before they resumed their academic hats. The notion that black studies are essential to building a black identity, and that if instituted in a university, they should be effectively run in a spirit the black community accepts, could hardly shock and repel a Jew. . . . Any Jew negotiating this demand would deal with it at once, directly, in its own terms, and his first item of negotiation would be to insist that the personnel and curriculum of such a department at Brandeis could under no circumstances be anti-Semitic. . . . It is hard to imagine . . . black nationalists treating this matter as a subterfuge and a phony tactic."

Mr. Waxman thinks I concentrate on black anti-Semitism. I repeat that black anti-Semitism bothers me less than the *understanding* of black anti-Semitism by white liberals and radicals, not least Jews. As Mr. Waxman says, I am not unfamiliar with those opinion-poll data on black anti-Semitism compared with white. But Earl Raab has reminded us that non-anti-Semites can support anti-Semitic movements or parties. Only anti-anti-Semites can be counted on not to support them. At that, the latest poll data are not entirely what Mr. Waxman implies. Among whites, the young remain less anti-Semitic than the old. Among blacks, Selznick and Steinberg now find the young more anti-Semitic than the old.

Is it because Miss Segal is a psychologist that she treats words set down on a page as if they were Rorschach blots? Her "impression" is wrong. So far from "advocating that we 'get the blacks,'" who after all are mostly lower-class, I was a bit snobbish about whom to be beastly to: classy Jews (liberal or radical), the idealistic young WASP Mayor of New York, the director of the Metropolitan Museum and his Jewish retinue. And why does Miss Segal go on so about Jewish merchants? I mentioned them, but I mentioned professors more. The unworthy thought occurs to me that Professor Segal would rather not think about professors. As to her idea that we should help Jewish merchants to move and begin again, with the least possible loss all around, that is being done in a number of places. It should be done in more. Ben Halpern asks whether we should not also help Jewish teachers to move and begin again. About that I am of two minds, as I know he is. Someone else may be asking whether we should not help Jewish professors to move and begin again—possibly, like some of the merchants ("exploiters"), in a more productive line of work? What would Miss Segal say to that?

It appears there are Jews actually more parochial than I. I know that most people who are not Jews seldom think about Jews from one year to the next, or at least from one month to the next. For Miss Segal, Negroes are always thinking about those successful Jews, envying their success, and resenting tactless Jewish reminders of it.

Miss Segal argues that my "solu-

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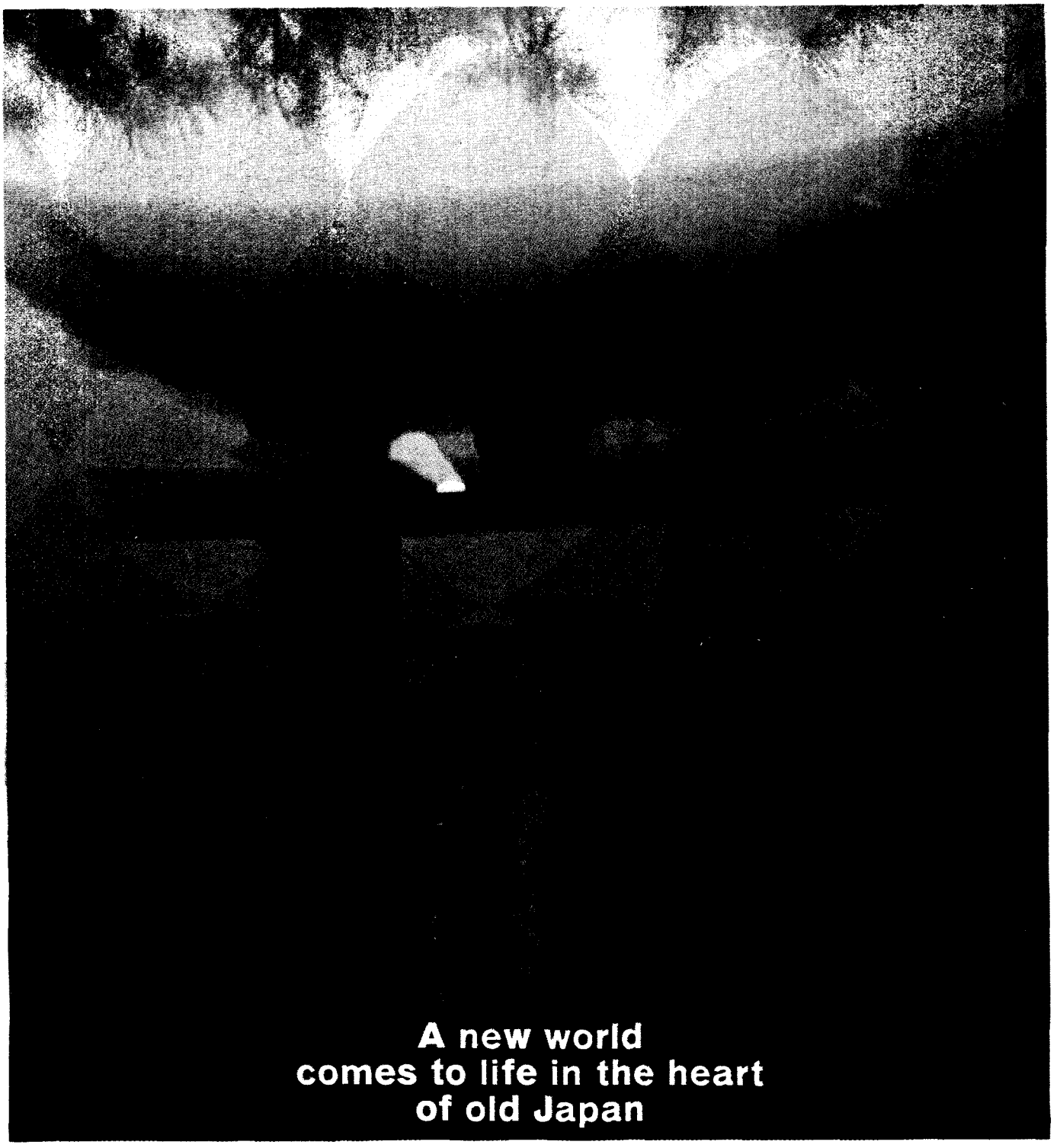

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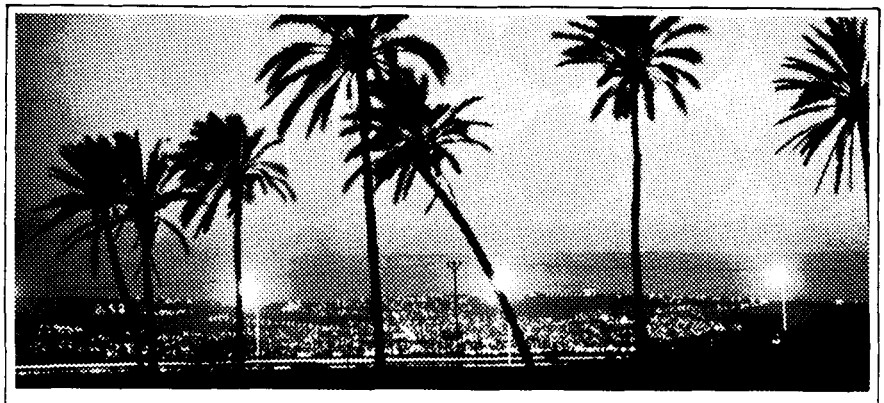
tion"—namely, "join the fascists"—will not work. She persuades me. I am resigning from the fascists and returning my membership card. But she has the advantage of knowing what causes anti-Semitism and what cures it. Once I knew, too. Now it is all rather vague—something about capitalism and abolishing capitalism. (Could I have been *that* clever?) Miss Segal is right: "fundamentally," the problem of anti-Semitism will be solved only when "the causes of . . . rage"—black rage, white, or any other—"are removed." Only, as I need not tell her, one or two psychologists of some standing have thought that *ressentiment* and civilization's discontents are pretty fundamental in their own right.

Mr. Stember is kind enough to thank me for my help. (As a diffident Bentley among Rollses, I called myself a guest.) Have I really failed to make it clear that I take the polls seriously, including quite recent ones? There *is* less anti-Semitism now than twenty-five or thirty years ago. I am skeptical not about the polls but about "a-Semitism"—and about anything like a point-to-point correspondence between public opinion and politics, on which Raab has written so well.

To Mr. Stember's "You did not!" I must answer, "I did, too!" That scholar I quoted is recorded in the stenotyped proceedings of the 1964 conference (pp. 100-01) as saying, about "what Mr. Himmelfarb had said": ". . . many people in this room have an interest in the persistence of anti-Semitism as a problem! [Laughter] There is a built-in bias in our situation here to look for anti-Semitism, and I think that we have to be very careful . . . of the propensity to look harder for something when it becomes less easy to see. This does not at all entirely answer Mr. Himmelfarb's proposition that this can become a major problem in the future and let us not let our guard down too much. . . ." (The reference is to a discussion on pp. 91-95.) And once again, because apparently it cannot be repeated too often: what makes me uneasy is that anti-Semitism has recaptured moral and political legitimacy, if only by being *understood*, after twenty years or so of all but total illegitimacy.

Last—and for me most importantly—my colleagues' letter. Although I have read and reread it, it still perplexes me. Least perplex-



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ing and least difficult to answer are the not entirely accurate summaries and attributions, like "educational policy." What I said was that if Negro children do not do well in school in New York, that is at least as much the fault of "employment policy . . . or migration policy" as of the teachers and schools; and that it is a bit much when certified good guys, our friends for many years, in fixing the responsibility for defective education, either proclaim that the (Jewish) teachers are guilty of genocide or refuse to say no to such proclamations.

Customarily, the young grow less young, and then have to give an account of themselves to the new young. Five, or ten, or thirty years from now a young Jew, out of his distress, may ask *his* elders why they not only did not resist but actually welcomed and justified the quota principle when it began to supersede the merit principle. Will a young Jew then find as much moral and intellectual value as now in the doctrine that the merit principle "*did* function to advance Jews, and . . . *does* function to exclude blacks"? We cannot even be confident that if Jews are lowered to 2+ per cent of the physicists, at least we shall be raised to 2+ per cent of the Olympic track medalists. Whatever happens anywhere else, something tells me that the merit principle, that pretext or device for advancements and exclusions, will still be in effect for sport. Of course, sport is already the least dishonest sector of American life—a little less dishonest than the used-car business and a good bit less than the professoriat, or the intelligentsia generally.

Now, after the emotion in which my colleagues wrote their letter, they may have come to regret some of their adjectives. The adjective *I* most regret is not any of their more striking ones. It is the "mere" in their "mere survival." I would not have thought that in this century Jews with feeling could dismiss the survival of the Jews as mere. Survival needs no *raison d'être*. Survival is life; no survival, no life. ("What did you do during the Revolution?"—"I survived.") Since in fact the survival of the Jews in this century has been so chancy, and since what the Jews have done with survival has been so extraordinary, "miraculous" may be more like it.

I understand the desire to make Jews, and Judaism, and the Jewish community, and the Jewish enterprise more—what is that word?—relevant to those Jews, especially students, whose habit it is to attach "mere" to "survival." How to go about it, I am unsure. I am sure how not to. Beautiful people though they are, we should not concede to them their "mere." Especially should we not concede it to ourselves. Do Jews like me and thinking like mine put obstacles in the way of the good Jews' labors for relevance? In every generation they stand over us to make an end of us, but He saves us from their hand.

Correction

Leon Radzinowicz was incorrectly identified in our May issue ("Books in Review," page 100). He is Wolfson Professor of Criminology at Cambridge University in England.

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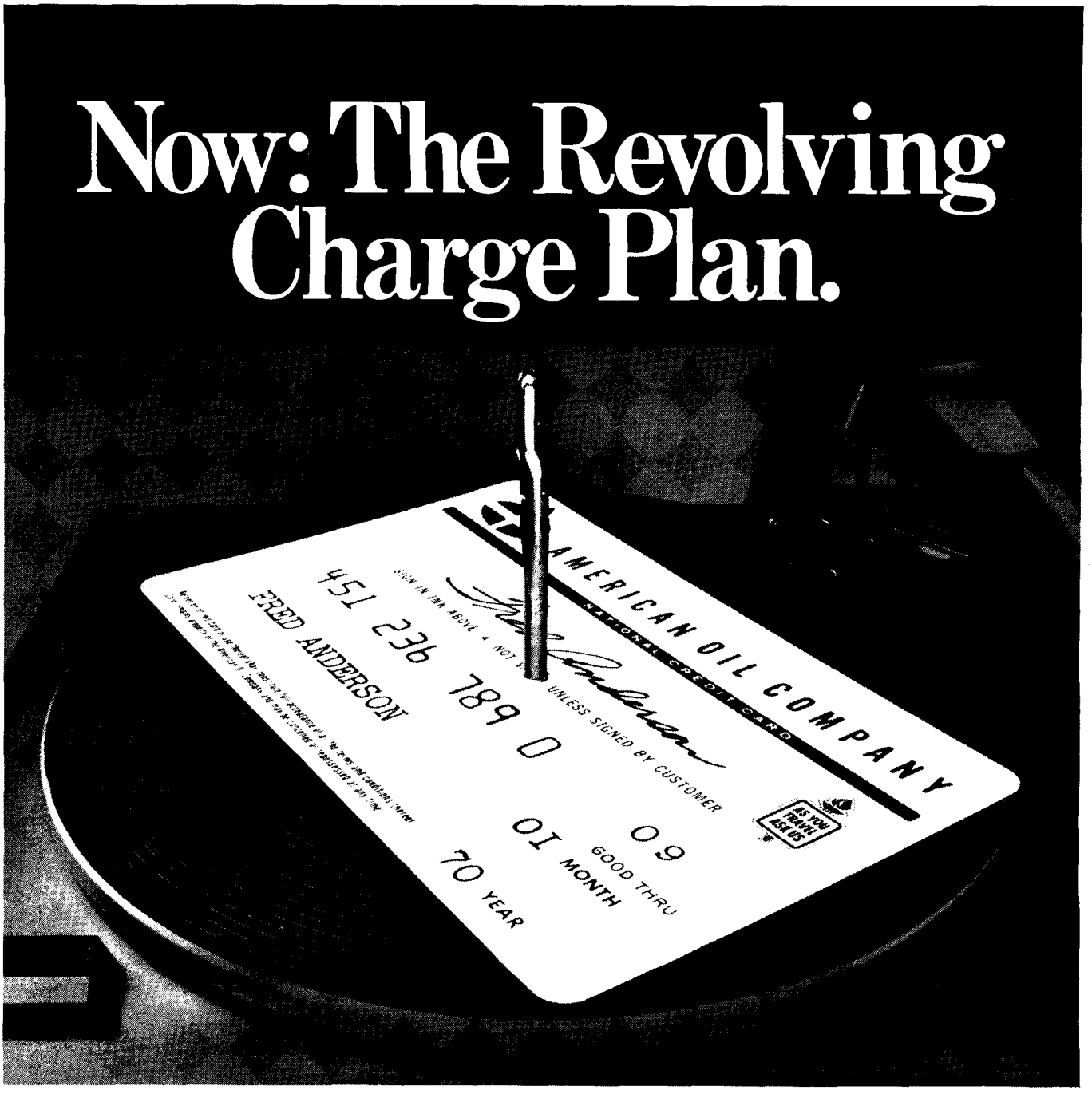

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On George Orwell

John Wain/George Woodcock

THE FOLLOWING EXCHANGE *was occasioned by George Woodcock's review of* The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell, *edited by Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus, which appeared in January 1969. John Wain is the well-known English novelist, poet, and critic.*

John Wain

OWING TO the various strikes and whatnot, your January issue has only recently arrived in England, and it was not till now that I read Mr. George Woodcock's interesting and well-informed review of George Orwell's *Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters.*

As one who has been reading Orwell steadily for twenty years, I agree with most of what Mr. Woodcock says, but one passage in his review is really too much to swallow. Discussing Orwell's patchy but always vital and perceptive London "Letters" to *Partisan Review* in wartime, Mr. Woodcock gives what any attentive reader would recognize as a misleading account of their content, stressing those points where Orwell's opinion happened to fit in with Woodcock's, and adds: "Later, when the sound and fury had died down, he was to apologize profusely to all those war resisters he had called 'objective' fascists, to become in many cases their close friends, and to find his natural place once again in the sectarian Left, defending civil liberties among the anarchists and libertarian socialists of the Freedom Defense Committee."

Let's take the first part first. Orwell "apologized profusely"? To all "war resisters"? He was a fair-minded man, and if it could be shown that he had made a specific charge against an individual that could not be justified, he was ready with an apology (e.g. to John Middleton Murry). But all through the war years he stuck to his point that when two nations are at war, to hinder the war effort of the one is, "objectively," to help that of the other, so that the pacifist movement, insofar as it made its presence felt, was pro-fascist in its outcome, whatever its intentions. If Mr. Woodcock knows of some passage in Orwell's writing where this opinion is definitely unsaid and withdrawn, he should cite it.

AS FOR Orwell's "finding his natural place" among the sectarian Left, how anyone could believe that after reading the latter part of *The Road to Wigan Pier,* I don't know. But then, the first sentence of Orwell's essay on Dickens comes to mind: "Dickens is one of those writers who are well worth stealing." Mr. Woodcock admires Orwell and is out to steal him, to kidnap him and keep him in the "anarchist and libertarian" menagerie; and this would be forgiveable if it didn't involve such a flagrant example of the intellectual vice Orwell hated most and denounced all his life: the habit of re-writing history, touching up the past so as to make it seem that you were right all along.

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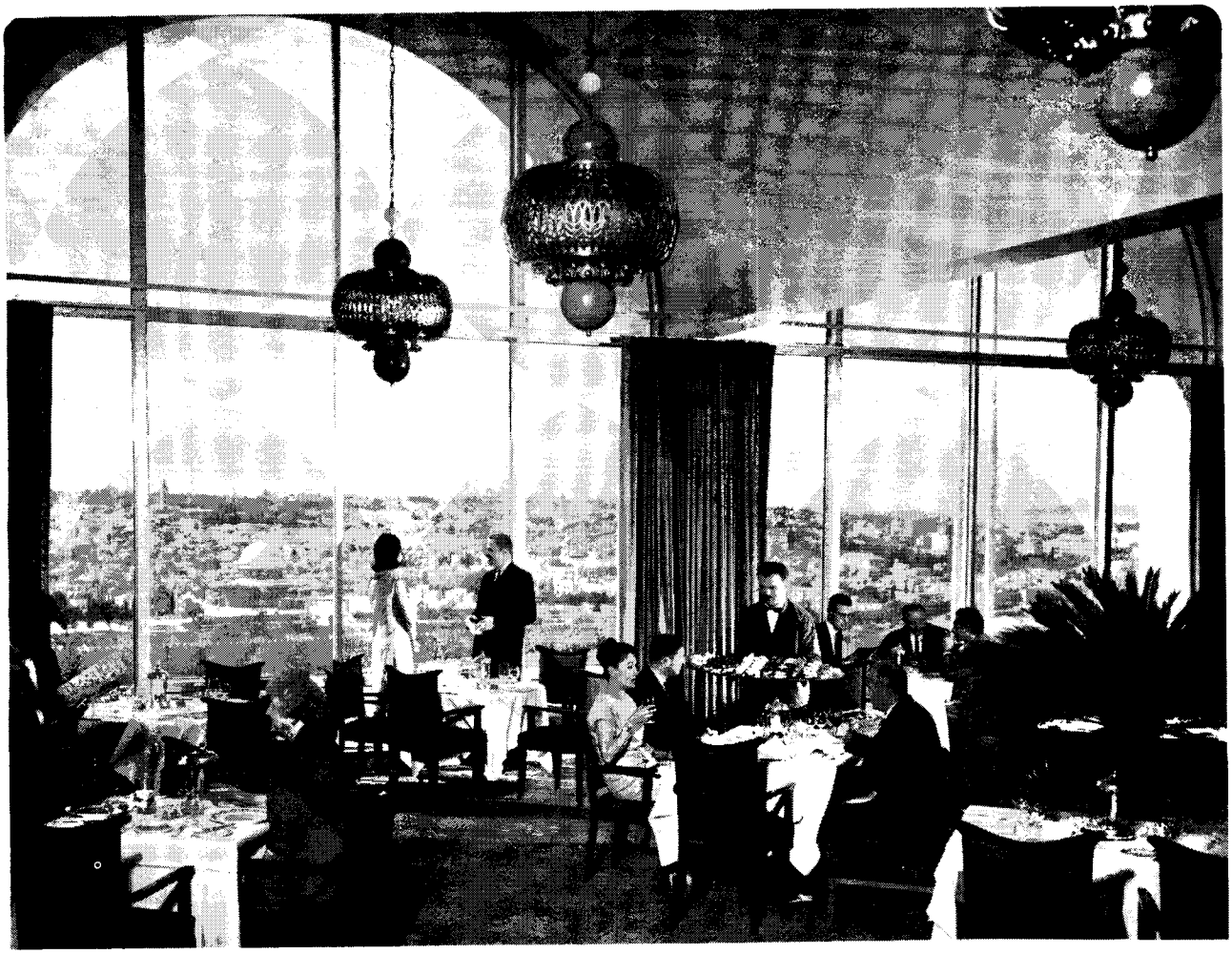

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George Woodcock

MR. WAIN may have been reading Orwell for twenty years, but he does not appear to have been reading him very thoroughly. If he had, he would not be maintaining that "all through the war years he [Orwell] stuck to his point that when two nations are at war, to hinder the war effort of the one is, 'objectively,' to help that of the other. . . ." In fact, in an "As I Please" item in the *Tribune* of December 8, 1944, pp. 288-290 of Volume IV in *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*, Orwell categorically repudiates the "objective" argument as dishonest and short-sighted. The passage in which he does so is important since, *pace* Mr. Wain, it implies a clear abandonment—at least on these grounds—of his accusations against war resisters:

> We are told that it is only people's objective actions that matter, and their subjective feelings are of no importance. Thus pacifists, by obstructing the war effort, are "objectively" aiding the Nazis; and therefore the fact that they may be personally hostile to fascism is irrelevant. *I have been guilty of saying this myself more than once.* The same argument is applied to Trotskyists. Trotskyists are often credited, at any rate by Communists, with being active and conscious agents of Hitler; but when you point out the many and obvious reasons why this is unlikely to be true, the "objectively" line of talk is brought forward again. To criticize the Soviet Union helps Hitler: therefore "Trotskyism is Fascism." And when this has been established, the accusation of conscious treachery is usually repeated.
>
> *This is not only dishonest*; it also carries a severe penalty with it. If you disregard people's motives, it becomes much harder to foresee their actions. . . ." (Emphasis added)

So much for Mr. Wain's first point. As for his second: since he lightly accuses me of falsifying history I must take the space to trace the vagaries of Orwell's political and personal connections. For Orwell, as good gray Mr. Wain is hardly likely to understand, was something of a chameleon, and to try—as Mr. Wain does—to base a comprehensive view of his politics on what he happened to say on one occasion in 1936 is absurd. It is true that in *The Road to Wigan Pier* Orwell castigates the freaks of the Left. At other times, as Mr. Wain will find if he is a little more careful in his reading of the *Essays, Journalism and Letters*, he is equally strong in castigating the Left establishment and the Labour party. His own record veered extremely, and, however strongly the conservatism that dominated one side of his nature might draw him toward a kind of patriotic social democracy, the radicalism that was its other side made him perpetually susceptible to the appeal of the sectarian personality.

A BRIEF glance at Orwell's political record will suffice, I think, to justify what I said in my review about his affinities with sectarians of the Left.

After calling himself an anarchist in his first rebellion from colonial service under the British Raj, Orwell's introduction to left-wing politics was strictly sectarian. It came through his involvement with the *Adelphi*, which for a time followed Middleton Murry's ephemeral Independent Communist party, and later adopted the revolutionary line of the Independent Labour party, then a sectarian splinter from the Labour party. When Orwell made his researches for *The Road to Wigan Pier*, he did so largely through ILP contacts, and he went to Spain with ILP recommendations, which led him to join the POUM militia (nothing more sectarian than that!) and to become involved on the POUM-Anarchist side in the May fighting of 1937 in Barcelona. On his return from Spain Orwell was a convinced anti-Communist and a convinced Socialist, but he did not join the Labour party. Instead, in 1938, he joined the sectarian ILP. As late as 1939 he was denouncing the Labour party as warmongers, and writing to the anarchist Herbert Read suggesting they collaborate in laying the groundwork for an underground propaganda network in the event of war.

IT IS TRUE that when war arrived Orwell's patriotism came very robustly to the surface. But even then he clung to the extreme left wing of those who supported the war, and kept the literary columns of the *Tribune* open to the pacifists, anarchists, Trotskyists, etc. After the war he became more critical of the Labour party and even, as his later letters show, of his former associates on the *Tribune*. During this period he contributed to libertarian and anarchist periodicals like the *New Leader* (of London); *Freedom* and *Now* (to whose publication fund he even gave money); and was prominent—as its vice chairman—in the Freedom Defense Committee, which he supported by financial contributions and public speeches. Read and I—anarchists both—were chairman and secretary respectively of that organization, and the working committee consisted entirely of members of small radical Left groups and the Peace Pledge Union.

All this is documented clearly in Volume IV of the *Essays*, which also includes many letters to anarchists and other Left sectarians which show clearly the close personal connections Orwell developed or renewed with them after the war. Julian Symons also has commented on this aspect of Orwell's last years in the *London Magazine*.

In my review I was talking of Orwell's relations with Left sectarians and pointing out that they illuminated an important aspect of his outlook. I never claimed—as Mr. Wain implies—that he was actually an *anarchist*, at least for the last twenty years of his life. As for the word *libertarian*, to which Mr. Wain appears equally strongly to object, how else, I ask, would he describe Orwell? As an *authoritarian*? There is surely no other alternative.

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To whip? perchance in cream! Aye, there's
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Reflections on Youth Movements

Walter Laqueur

I CAN well imagine that on Saturday nights across this country, at hundreds of faculty parties where a year and a half ago the main subject of discussion was the war in Vietnam, thousands of professors and their wives now passionately debate the pros and cons of the student movement, the tactics of the SDS, and the significance of the generational conflict. I myself have attended several such gatherings, and have been struck not so much by the intensity with which the actions of the students are either approved of or condemned by their elders, as by the baffled consensus among those elders that the movement is both unprecedented and totally inexplicable in terms of what the university has historically represented. When I am asked, as I invariably am, for the European view on these matters, I rarely manage more than a few words, to the effect that the American situation is unique and that anyway history never repeats itself—which, needless to say, is of no great help to anyone. And yet, I believe there *is* something to be learned from the European experience, even if the lesson is an ambiguous one. Not the least thing to be learned is that the Western university has by no means always represented that tranquil meeting-ground, so fondly misremembered now by American professors, of those who would gladly learn with those who would gladly teach.

Quite the contrary. Organized youth revolt has for a long time been an integral part of European history. That, on the one hand. On the other, the idea of the university as a quiet place, devoted to the pursuit of learning and unaffected by the turbulence of the outside world, is of comparatively recent date. The medieval university certainly was no such place. As Nathan Schachner has pointed out, it was a place characterized more by bloody affrays, pitched battles, mayhem, rape, and homicide: "Indeed by the frequency of riots one may trace the rise of the University to power and privilege." In his monumental study, *Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, Hastings Rashdall relates the violence of the medieval university to the violence of medieval times in general, when the slitting of a throat was not regarded even by the Church as the worst of mortal sins. Thus, a Master of Arts at the University of Prague who had cut the throat of a Friar Bishop was merely expelled, while in the case of other offenders punishment consisted in the confiscation of scholastic effects and garments. The police were openly ridiculed by students, and the universities did nothing to exact discipline from their own scholars. In dealing with the subject of students' morals, Rashdall is constrained to write in Latin. According to Charles Thurot's history of Paris University in the Middle Ages, masters frolicked with their pupils and even took part in their disorders. The university was a great concourse of men and boys freed from all parental restrictions; morality, as Schachner notes, was a private affair, as were the comings and goings of the students. Nor was the trouble localized; the same complaints were to be heard from Oxford to Vienna and Salamanca.

As for the professor, his position in the medieval university was not what it became in later days. He was, first of all, paid by the students. A professor at Bologna needed his students' permission if he wanted to leave town even for a single day; he had to pay a fine if he arrived late in class or if he ended his lecture before the chiming of the church bells; should his lectures not meet with favor, there was a good chance that he would be interrupted, hissed, or even stoned. Supported by King and Church, medieval students enjoyed almost unlimited freedom. It was an unwritten rule, for instance, that they were always in the right in their clashes with townspeople. Of course, from time to time the citizenry would get even by killing a few students; the Oxford town-and-gown riots of 1354 were one such response, if a major one, to student provocation—provocation that took the form, in the words of a contemporary chronicler, of "atrociously wounding and slaying many, carrying off women, ravishing virgins, committing robberies and many other enormities hateful to God." To be sure, the real troublemakers were a minority, some of them not even students but young vagabonds enjoying the immunities of the scholar, drifting from master to master and from university to university. For every scholar involved in felonious of-

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fenses there were dozens whose story is unknown. "They studied conscientiously, attended lectures and disputations, worked hard, ate frugally, drank their modest stoup of wine, and had no time for the delights of tavern and brothel. The annals of the virtuous, like the annals of a happy people, are short and barren" (Schachner). Nevertheless, it is a fact that only in later ages did the university begin to impose stricter discipline on its students.

If student violence in the Middle Ages can be ascribed mainly to the high spirits of youth, by the 18th century a new figure had appeared on the scene: the student as freedom fighter. *Die Raeuber* ("The Robbers"), the play that made Schiller famous, tells the story of a group of students who, disgusted by society and its inequities, take to the mountains to lead partisan warfare against the oppressors. (In the 1920's when Piscator staged the play in Berlin, he had Spiegelberg, one of the leaders of the gang and incidentally a Jew, appear in the mask of Trotsky.) *Sturm und Drang*, the first real literary movement of youth revolt, combined opposition to social conventions with a style of life that is familiar enough today: wild language, long hair, and strange attire. Within a few decades after its inception, the romantics had made this movement fashionable, if not respectable, all over Europe. Suddenly there was Young England and Young Germany, Young Italy, Young Hungary, and Young Russia—all up in arms against the tyranny of convention, tradition, and outworn beliefs. One of the very few places untouched by the cult of youth at that time was America, itself a young country, unencumbered by the dead weight of tradition: *America*, Goethe apostrophized, *du hast es besser. . . .*

SOME YOUTH GROUPS in the modern period have done much good, while others have caused a great deal of harm. It has been the custom in writing about them to divide them into the progressive and the reactionary, the wholesome and the decadent, so that, for example, the revolutionary Russian student movement of the 19th century, the Italian Risorgimento, and the Chinese May 1919 movement fall in one camp, and the fascist youth movements fall in the other. But this scheme is at best an oversimplification, since almost all movements of youthful revolt have contained in themselves both elements at once. The historical role a movement finally played depended in each case on political conditions in the society at large, the gravity of the problems the movement faced, the degree of its cultural development, and the quality of the guidance it received from its mentors.

The dual character of youth movements is illustrated with particular clarity by the example of the early German student circles, the *Burschenschaften*. In his recent book, Lewis Feuer characterizes the members of these circles as "historicists, terrorists, totalitarians and anti-Semites" —all of which is perfectly true.* But they were also genuine patriots who dreamed of German unity and set out to combat the tyranny and oppression of the Holy Alliance. Most of them, in addition, were democrats of sorts and their movement was regarded by the liberals of the day as one of great promise. Their story is briefly told. The leader of the group was Karl Follen, a lecturer at Jena, of whom a contemporary wrote that "no one could be compared with him for purity and chastity of manners and morals. He seemed to concentrate all his energies upon one great aim—the revolution." In 1818, a certain Karl Sand, an idealistic and highly unstable student of theology who had come under Follen's influence, assassinated a minor playwright by the name of August Kotzebue who was suspected of being a Russian agent. Sand genuinely expected that this action, undertaken in the service of a holy cause, would trigger a revolution. But the choice of victim was haphazard, and the consequences regrettable: the government seized the opportunity to suppress the *Burschenschaft* as well as the whole democratic movement. Follen escaped to America, where he became professor of German literature and preacher at Harvard (he later drowned at sea in a shipwreck). It took almost thirty years for the movement he had led to recover from the blow dealt it by the authorities.

The idealism, spirit of sacrifice, devotion to one's people, and revolutionary fervor that marked the *Burschenschaft* have been an inherent part of all youth movements over the last hundred years. It is a mistake to assume that the fascist youth movements were an exception to this rule, that their members were mainly sadistic, blindly destructive young thugs. To be sure, they preached a doctrine of violence, but as Mussolini said, "there is a violence that liberates, and there is a violence that enslaves; there is moral violence and stupid, immoral violence" (compare Marcuse: "In terms of historical function, there is a difference between revolutionary and reactionary violence, between violence practiced by the oppressed and by the oppressors"). The ideological forerunners of Italian fascism, men like Corradini and Federzoni, were second to none in their condemnation of capitalism and imperialism and in their defense of the rights of the "proletarian nations." Early fascist programs demanded a republic, the abolition of all titles, a unified education, the control and taxation of all private income, and the confiscation of unproductive capital. They also placed great stress on youth. Giovanni Gentile, the philosopher of fascism, considered the sole aim of the new movement to be the "spiritual liberation of the young

* *The Conflict of Generations.* Basic Books, 543 pp., $12.50.

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Italians." The very anthem of the fascist regime was an appeal to the young generation: *Giovinezza, Giovinezza, primavera di bellezza.*

Similarly in Germany, where the student movement after the First World War was strongly nationalist; the Nazi student association emerged as the leading force in the German universities (and in Austria) in 1930, well before Hitler had become the leader of the strongest German party. With 4,000 registered members out of a total of 132,000 students, the Nazis easily took control of the chief organization of German students several years before the party's seizure of national power. The declared aim of the Nazi student association was to destroy liberalism and international capitalism; point two on its program was to "purge the university of the influence of private capital"; point nine called on students to join the ranks of the workers. The slogan of "student power" made its first appearance at the *Goettingen Studententag* in 1920. Later on it was linked to the demand that the university be made political, a real "people's university," and that all the academic cobwebs and so-called "objective sciences" be cleaned out. Even before Hitler came to power, leading German professors attacked the "idea of false tolerance" of the humanist university. Invoking Fichte, Hegel, and Schleiermacher, they held that liberal democracy was the main enemy of the true scientific spirit, and demanded that henceforth only one political philosophy be taught. The Nazis, needless to say, were still more radical: academic life, they said, had largely become an end in itself; located outside the sphere of real life, the university educated two types of students—the only-expert and the only-philosopher. These two types produced a great many books and much clever and refined table-talk, but neither they nor the universities which sustained them were in a position to give clear answers to the burning questions of the day.

Criticisms like these were common at the time all over Europe. An observer of the French scene wrote in 1931 that the main characteristic of the young generation was its total rejection of the existing order: "almost no one defends the present state of affairs." One of the most interesting French youth groups was *L'Ordre Nouveau*, whose manifesto, written by Dandieu and Robert Aron, had the title, *La Révolution Nécessaire. Ordre Nouveau* stood for the liberation of man from capitalist tyranny and materialistic slavery; Bolshevism, fascism, and National Socialism, it declared, had assumed the leadership of the young generation and for that reason would prevail everywhere. The young in France were deeply affected—to quote yet another contemporary witness—by a "tremendous wave of revolutionary enthusiasm, of holy frenzy and disgust." When several prominent young socialists seceded from the SFIO in opposition to the rule of the old gang and established a movement of their own, this too was welcomed as one more manifestation of the rebellion of the young generation. All these people were deeply troubled by the existing state of affairs and no doubt well meaning in their intentions; together with Jean Luchaire, the leader of *Ordre Nouveau*, many of them ended up as Nazi collaborators during World War II.

The tactics adopted by these youth groups vis-à-vis the universities were the tactics of agitation. Even before the First World War, members of the *Action Française* had made it a custom to disrupt systematically the lectures of professors at the Sorbonne who had provoked their ire for political reasons. Nazi students perfected the system, forcing universities to dismiss Jewish professors, and even one Christian pacifist, well before 1933. But the question must be asked again: was this rowdyism, or an action undertaken in the genuine conviction that one's country was in grave danger and that the professors were enemies of the people who had to be removed? Among the fascist youth movements in the late 20's, one of the most sinister was the Rumanian terrorist band, the *Archangel Michael*, which later became the Iron Guard. Yet even the members of this group were not devoid of sincerity and idealism; Eugen Weber recently wrote of their leader: "From a mendacious people he demanded honesty, in a lazy country he demanded work, in an easy-going society he demanded self discipline and persistence, from an exuberant and windy folk he demanded brevity and self-control." Whoever describes a youth movement as idealistic only states the obvious. Youth movements have never been out for personal gain; what motivates them is different from what motivates an association for the protection of the interests of small shopkeepers. The fascist experience has shown that the immense potential which inheres in every youth movement can be exploited in the most disastrous way; but the potential itself must be seen as neutral.

ALMOST everything that is great has been done by youth, wrote Benjamin Disraeli, himself at one time a fighter in the ranks of generational revolt. Professor Feuer would counter: many disasters in modern European politics have been caused by students and youth movements. The exploits of the *Burschenschaften*, he argues, set back the cause of German freedom thirty years. Russian student terrorism in the 1880's put an end to progress toward constitutionalism in that country. But for the terror and stress of the First World War (inaugurated by a bomb thrown by yet another student hero, Gavrilo Princip), Russia would have evolved in a liberal capitalist direction, and European civilization would not have been maimed by fascism and a second World War. According to Professor Feuer, the qualities needed to bring about peaceful social and political change are not those

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usually found in youth movements, and he accuses students of almost always acting irrationally in pursuing their objectives. Unfortunately, however, peaceful change is not always possible in history, nor are patience and prudence invariably the best counsel. Take the Munich students who revolted against Hitler in 1943 and the student rebels who were recently sentenced in the Soviet Union; had they acted entirely rationally, they might well have convinced themselves that as a consequence of long-term political and social processes, the dictatorship would disappear anyway or at least be mitigated in its ferocity. Why therefore endanger their lives? To their eternal credit, such rational considerations did not enter the students' minds. The impetuosity, the impatience, and sometimes the madness of youth movements has been a liberating force in the struggle against tyranny and dictatorship. Tyranny cannot be overthrown unless at least some people are willing to sacrifice their lives, and those willing to do so usually do not come from the ranks of the senior citizens. It is only when youth movements have launched a total attack against democratic regimes and societies—in Germany, France, and Italy in the 20's and in other countries later on—that they have come to play by necessity a reactionary and destructive role.

Most of the basic beliefs and even the outward fashions of the present world youth movements can be traced back to the period in Europe just before and after the First World War. The German *Neue Schar* of 1919 were the original hippies: long-haired, sandaled, unwashed, they castigated urban civilization, read Hermann Hesse and Indian philosophy, practiced free love, and distributed in their meetings thousands of asters and chrysanthemums. They danced, sang to the music of the guitar, and attended lectures on the "Revolution of the Soul." The modern happening was born in 1910 in Trieste, Parma, Milan, and other Italian cities where the Futurists arranged public meetings to recite their poems, read their manifestoes, and exhibit their ultra-modern paintings. No one over thirty, they demanded, should in future be active in politics. The public participated actively at these gatherings, shouting, joking, and showering the performers with rotten eggs. In other places, things were not so harmless. "Motiveless terror" formed part of the program of a group of young Russian anarchists, the *Bezmotivniki,* in their general struggle against society. The *Bezmotivniki* threatened to burn down whole cities, and their news sheets featured diagrams for the production of home-made bombs. Drug-taking as a social phenomenon, touted as a way of gaining new experience and a heightened sensibility, can be traced back to 19th-century France and Britain. The idea of a specific youth culture was first developed in 1913-14 by the German educator Gustav Wyneken and a young man named Walter Benjamin who later attained literary fame. In 1915, Friedrich Bauermeister, an otherwise unknown member of the youth movement, developed the idea of the "class struggle of youth." Bauermeister regarded the working class and the socialist movement (including Marx and Engels) as "eudaimonistic"; the socialists, he admitted, stood for a just order and higher living standards, but he feared that once their goals were achieved they would part ways with the youth movement. Bauermeister questioned whether even the social revolution could create a better type of man, or release human beings from their "bourgeois and proletarian distortions."

The ideas of this circle were developed in a little magazine called *Der Anfang* in 1913-14. Youth, the argument ran (in anticipation of Professor Kenneth Keniston), was *milieulos,* not yet integrated into society. Unencumbered by the ties of family or professional careers, young people were freer than other elements of society. As for their lack of experience, for which they were constantly criticized by their elders, this, far from being a drawback, was in fact a great advantage. Walter Benjamin called experience the "mask of the adult." For what did the adult wish above all to prove? That he, too, had once been young, had disbelieved his parents, and had harbored revolutionary thoughts. Life, however, had taught the adult that his parents had been right after all, and now he in turn smiled with condescending superiority and said to the younger generation: this will be your fate too.

For the historian of ideas, the back issues of the periodicals of the youth movement, turned yellow with age, make fascinating reading. The great favorites of 1918-19 were Hermann Hesse, Spengler's *Decline of the West,* Zen Buddhism and Siddharta, Tagore's gospel of spiritual unity (*Love not Power*), and Lenin. It is indeed uncanny how despite all the historical differences, the German movement preempted so many of the issues agitating the American movement of today, as well as its literary fashions.

Some youth movements in the last hundred years have been unpolitical in character. Most, however, have had definite political aims. Of this latter group, some have belonged to the extreme Left, others have gravitated to the extreme Right; some have sought absolute freedom in anarchy, others have found fulfillment in subordinating themselves to a leader. To find a common denominator seems therefore very nearly hopeless. But the contradictions are often more apparent than real, not only because many of those who originally opted for the extreme Left later moved to the Right, or vice versa, or because the extremes sometimes found common ground as in the National Bolshevik movement which gained some prominence in various countries in the 1920's. Whether a certain movement became political or unpolitical, whether it opted for the

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Left or the Right, depended on the historical context: it hardly needs to be explained in detail why youth movements were preponderantly right-wing after the First World War, while more recently most have tended toward the left. But beyond the particular political orientation there are underlying motives which have remained remarkably consistent throughout.

Youth movements have always been extreme, emotional, enthusiastic; they have never been moderate or rational (again, no major excursion into the psychology of youth is needed to explain this). Underlying their beliefs has always been a common anti-capitalist, anti-bourgeois denominator, a conviction that the established order is corrupt to the bones and beyond redemption by parliamentary means of reform. The ideologies of democracy and liberalism have always been seen as an irretrievable part of the whole rotten system; all politicians, of course, are crooks. Equally common to all youth groups is a profound pessimism about the future of present-day culture and an assumption that traditional enlightened concepts like tolerance are out of date. The older generation has landed the world in a mess, and a radical new beginning, a revolution, is needed. Youth movements have never been willing to accept the lessons of the past; each generation is always regarded as the first (and the last) in history. And the young have always found admiring adults to confirm them in their beliefs.

THIS LEADS US to the wider issue of *Kulturpessimismus*. The idea that the world is in decline—an idea that is about as old as the world itself—had an impact on modern youth movements through the mediating influence of neo-romanticism. The themes of decadence and impending doom can be traced like a bright thread through the 19th century from Alfred de Musset (*"Je suis venu trop tard dans un monde trop vieux"*), to Carlyle, Ruskin, and Arnold with their strictures against the universal preoccupation with material gain. So widespread a fashion did *Kulturpessimismus* enjoy that one can scarcely find a single self-respecting 19th-century author who did not complain about the disjunction between mankind and the world, between idea and reality, or about the spiritual bankruptcy and moral consumption of his age. In Germany, as *mal du siècle* turned into *fin de siècle*, a whole phalanx of Cassandras raised their voices, denouncing mass culture, crass materialism, and the lack of a sense of purpose in modern life. *Kulturpessimismus* induced in some a sense of resignation and gave rise to decadent moods in literature and the arts; at the same time, however, it acted as a powerful stimulus to movements of regeneration. Whereas dissatisfaction led some to ennui and perversions (*La jeune France*, an all-out revolt against social conventions, was decadent and wholly unpolitical in character), elsewhere and in other periods boredom gave birth to activism. Thus, on the eve of the First World War, a whole generation of young Europeans, having pronounced themselves culturally suffocated, welcomed the outbreak of hostilities as heralding a great purge, a liberation that would somehow put things right. The close connection between *Kulturpessimismus* and boredom deserves more study than it has received so far, as does the connection between boredom and prosperity. Max Eyth, the German popular writer, astutely diagnosed the illness of his age in the autobiography he wrote during the Wilhelminian era: *"Es is uns seit einer Reihe von Jahren zu gut gegangen"* (We had it too good for a number of years).

One of the main problems facing the decadents was that of combining their hatred of modern civilization with their love of the refinements that civilization had made possible. (This is still very much of a problem, although some of today's revolutionaries seem to have solved it on the personal if not on the ideological level.) The decadents also faced the dilemma of squaring their *langueur*—Verlaine: *Je suis l'Empire à la fin de la décadence*—with their fascination with violence and revolutionary action. The indiscriminate assassinations and bombings carried out by the French anarchists found many admirers among both the decadents and the right-wing futurists. "What matter the victims, provided the gesture is beautiful," Laurent Tailhade wrote. D'Annunzio's career as a writer progressed from descriptions of courtesans in modish clothes, luminous landscapes, and villas by the sea, to the most lavish praise of the freshness and joy of war. Having begun by calling on youth to "abolish all moral restrictions," he ended as the prophet of moral regeneration and the poet laureate of fascism. The list could be lengthened: Maurice Barrès made his way from the decadent movement to the *Action Française;* Johannes R. Becher, who in the early 20's was known in Germany as the mad expressionist poet who had killed his girl friend, was to become in later life minister of culture in Walter Ulbricht's East Germany.

If the youth movements of the early 20th century arose, then, in a milieu in which the sense of decadence was widespread, they represented at the same time an attempt to overcome it. Their leaders were moralists, forever complaining about the evils of corporate guilt. Like all moralists, they exaggerated those evils, speaking out of the anti-historical perspective which is a hallmark of the moralist. For the study of history teaches that other periods have, broadly speaking, not been much better than one's own. This is why the moralist and the revolutionary regard history as a reactionary discipline, the story of big failures and small successes. The study of history is a breeding-ground of skepticism; the less the moralist knows of it, the more effectively will he pur-

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sue his mission with an untroubled conscience. Thomas Mann, pleading in a famous speech to German students in the 1920's for "aristocratic skepticism in a world of frenetic fools," was sadly out of touch with the mood of an audience longing for firm belief and certain truths.

IF IN what I have said up till now my remarks have indicated a certain ambivalence of feeling toward youth movements in general, it is because I have been trying to distinguish between the various ideas which they have espoused—ideas which are certainly deserving of criticism—and, what I take to be of even greater significance, the depth of emotional experience which they have provided their members.* (I say this as one who shared that experience at one stage in his life.) The politics and culture of youth movements have always been a reflection of the Zeitgeist, a hodgepodge, often, of mutually exclusive ideas. A proto-Nazi wrote about the unending and fruitless discussions of German youth movements in 1920: "Look at those *Freideutsche* leaders and their intellectual leap-frogging from Dostoevsky to Chuang-tse, Count Keyserling, Spengler, Buddha, Jesus, Landauer, Lenin, and whichever literary Jew happens to be fashionable to the moment. Of their own substance they have little or nothing." There was, let's face it, more than a grain of truth in this criticism; a list of the main formative intellectual influences on the American movement would look even more incongruous. But what was essential about the German youth movement, at least in its first phase, was *not* its "intellectual leap-frogging" and confused politics but something else entirely. The movement represented an *un*political form of opposition to a civilization that had little to offer the young generation, a protest against the lack of vitality, warmth, emotion, and ideals in German society. (Hoelderlin: "I can conceive of no people more dismembered. . . . You see workmen but no human beings, thinkers but no human beings, priests but no human beings, masters and servants, youth and staid people, but no human beings. . . .") It wanted to develop qualities of sincerity, decency, open-mindedness, to free its members from petty egoism and careerism, to oppose artificial conventions, snobbery, and affectation. Its basic character was formless and intangible, its authentic and deepest experience difficult to describe and perhaps impossible to analyze: the experience of marching together, of participating in common struggles, of forming lasting friendships. There was, of course, much romantic exaltation as well, but although it is easier to ridicule the extravagances of this state of mind than to do it justice, the temptation should be resisted: experiences of such depth are very serious matters indeed.

The non-political phase of the German youth movement ended roughly speaking with the First World War. Summarizing that early phase, I wrote several years ago that "if lack of interest in politics could provide an alibi from history, the youth movement would then leave the court without a stain on its character."† In retrospect, this judgment seems a trifle misplaced; the truth is that the movement was simply not equipped to deal with politics. Being romantic and opposed to "arid intellectualism," its thought was confused and its outlook illiberal. Oriented toward a mythic past and an equally mythic future, it was darkly suspicious of the values of the Enlightenment—an attitude that did not have much to commend it in a country where the Enlightenment had not met with conspicuous success anyway—and it was easily swayed in different directions by philosophical charlatans and political demagogues preaching all kinds of eccentric doctrines.

All this appeared very clearly in the second, political phase of the German youth movement after the First World War. By 1930, the youth movement was displaying an incontinent eagerness to rid Germany of democracy. Almost all its members shared the assumption that anything at all would be better than the detested old regime. Lacking experience and imagination, they clearly misjudged the major political forces of their time. One of their leaders wrote much later: "We had no real principles. We thought everything possible. The ideas of natural law, of the inalienable rights of man, were strange to us. As far as our ideas were concerned we were in mid-air, without a real basis for our artificial constructions." It was, in brief, not an intellectual movement, and any attempt to evaluate it on the cultural and political level alone will not do it justice; it moved on a different plane. The movement arose in response to a certain malaise; it attempted, without success, to solve the conflicts facing it; and it was, in retrospect, a splendid failure. With all its imperfections, it did succeed in inspiring loyalties and a deep sense of commitment among its members.

I am not sure whether today's youth movements can achieve even this much. "People who screw together, glue together," claims the Berkeley SDS, but if that were true, the Roman Empire would still be in existence. Some time ago, I happened to meet with members of a radical pacifist communal settlement in upstate New York. This settlement had had its origins in the early German youth movement; its members were believing Christians who took their cue from the New

* Although I originally intended this as a statement about youth movements of the past, I now read in Martin Duberman's review of Christopher Lasch's new book, *The Agony of the American Left*: "I think what is most impressive about the radical young people is not their politics or their social theories, but the cultural revolution they have inaugurated—the change in life style."

† *Young Germany: A History of the German Youth Movement.*

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Testament: "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon," and "the love of money is the root of all evil." Setting out to realize the ideal of social justice in their own lives, they established two settlements in Germany, moved to England in 1934, then to Paraguay, and finally to New York State. Still convinced that their way of life is the best of all possible ways, the surviving members have recently been trying to find supporters and active followers. On their tours of college campuses they are invariably met with tremendous enthusiasm and a great show of willingness to join. Then, a few days after each appearance, they send a bus around to take prospective candidates for a tour of the settlement. No one shows up. One could argue that it is unfair to compare the depth of commitment and the ardor of present-day revolutionaries with that shown by those who challenged less permissive societies in bygone days. Where the 19th-century revolutionary risked the gallows or a lifetime in Siberia, the rebel of the 60's risks a warning from a disciplinary committee. In these adverse circumstances a breed of devoted revolutionaries is unlikely to arise. That may be finally all to the good, but I for one confess to a certain nostalgia for the breed.

IT HAS BEEN said of youth movements: blessed is the land that has no need of them. For a long time, America was such a land. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, it alone among the major Western countries did not experience a widespread movement of generational conflict. The reasons for this are not particularly obscure. For one thing, the burden of the past was not felt as heavily in America as it was in Europe. Less distance separated parents and children, teachers and students; adventurous young men went West, the country was forever expanding; society as a whole was far less rigid. Then in the 20th century, when these factors had ceased to be quite so important, America was spared a movement of youth revolt by a series of economic and foreign political crises. For it is a rule of youth movements that, like *Kulturpessimismus,* they prosper only against a background of rising affluence. Another rule appears to be that they cannot strike deep roots in a country whose general mood is basically optimistic.

America in the 60's is a prosperous society, but it is no longer optimistic: the American dream has been lost on the way to affluence. It was thus in a sense inevitable that when the worldwide wave of youth revolt broke earlier in this decade, American youth should assume a leading role. (I am not speaking here of the black student revolt, because this is not a generational conflict but part of a wider movement for full political and social emancipation, and the success or failure of this movement will depend ultimately on the blacks themselves.) But the American situation is a complicated one, not only because it is accompanied by such factors as a general breakdown of authority, a crisis in the universities, and a widespread sense of cultural malaise, but also because of the response it has elicited in the society at large. Youth movements have come and gone, but never before has one been taken so seriously. Never in the past has an older generation been so disconcerted by the onslaught of the young. Previous generations of adults, more certain of their traditions and values, less ridden by feelings of guilt, have shown little patience with their rebellious sons and daughters. The middle-aged, middle-class parents of today clearly do not feel themselves to be in any such position of certainty. The milieu in which the youth of America have grown up bears striking resemblance to the European 1890's as described by Max Nordau:

> There is a sound of rending in every tradition and it is as though the morrow would not link itself with today. Things as they are totter and plunge, and they are suffered to reel and fall because man is weary, and there is no faith that it is worth an effort to uphold them. Views that have hitherto governed minds are dead or driven hence, meanwhile interregnum in all its terrors prevails and there is confusion among the powers that be . . . what shall inspire us? So rings the question from the thousand voices of the people, and where a market-vendor sets up his booth and claims to give an answer, where a fool or a knave begins suddenly to prophesy in verse or prose, in sound or color, or professes to practice his art otherwise than his predecessors and competitors, there gathers a great concourse around him to seek in what he has wrought, as in Oracles of the Pythia, some meaning to be divined and interpreted. . . . It is only a very small minority who honestly find pleasure in the new tendencies, and announce them with genuine conviction as that which is sound, a sure guide for the future, a pledge of pleasure and of moral benefit. But this minority has the gift of covering the whole visible surface of society, as a little oil extends over a large area of the surface of the sea. It consists chiefly of rich educated people, or of fanatics. The former give the *ton* to all the snobs, the fools, and the blockheads; the latter make an impression upon the weak and dependent, and it intimidates the nervous. . . .

Nordau's *Degeneration* is an exaggerated, polemical tract, but much of what he wrote about the malady of his age was pertinent; he realized correctly that ideas, books, and works of art exercise a powerful, suggestive influence far beyond the small circle of the avant-garde: "It is from these productions that an age derives its ideals of morality and beauty. If they are absurd and anti-social they exert a disturbing and corrupting influence on the views of a whole generation." The moral and aesthetic ideals of today's avant-

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garde theater and cinema have certainly had their effect—as have the works of Jean Genet and Frantz Fanon. The deliberate gibberish of recent movies and novels finds its reflection in the involuntary gibberish of certain strands of youth politics; the message of John Cage's "Silent Sonata 4.33" (in which a performer sits in front of a piano for precisely that amount of time, poised to play but never playing) has its parallel in certain aspects of the wider cultural revolution; the theater of the absurd is not unconnected with the politics of the absurd. Indeed, the crisis of rationality has had a powerful impact: affirmation replaces analysis and argumentation; *fin de siècle* revolutionaries arrange happenings and call it a revolution, or discuss *salon* Maoism before enthusiastic audiences and call it radical commitment. Afraid to appear unfashionable or out of step with the avant-garde, those who ought to know better seem willing to take every idiocy seriously, trying to "understand" if not to accept.

Corruptio optimi pessima. The American youth movement, with its immense idealistic potential, has gone badly, perhaps irrevocably, off the rails. For this, a great responsibility falls on the shoulders of the gurus who have provided the ideological justification for the movement in its present phase—those intellectuals, their own bright dream having faded, who now strain to recapture their ideological virginity. There is perhaps some tragedy to be glimpsed in this endeavor of the old to keep pace with the young, but at the moment one cannot permit himself the luxury of a tragic sense. The doctors of the American youth movement are in fact part of its disease. They have helped to generate a great deal of passion, but aside from the most banal populism they have failed to produce a single new idea. Most of them stress their attachment to Marx. But one need only read *The Eighteenth Brumaire* to find Marx's opinion on the value of bohemianism in the revolutionary struggle; and his polemics against Bakunin leave little doubt as to his feelings with regard to the idea, first propagated one hundred years ago, of a coalition between *lumpenproletariat* and *lumpenintelligentsia.* Students should not be criticized for ignoring the lessons of the past and the dangers of chiliastic movements. They always do; the historical memory of a generation does not usually extend back very far, and the lessons of historical experience cannot be bequeathed by will or testament. But their mentors do remember, and their betrayal of memory cannot be forgiven.

The American youth revolt was sparked off by Vietnam, by race conflict, and later on by the crisis of the university. At any point along the line rational alternatives could have been formulated and presented. Instead, the movement preferred a total, unthinking rejection, and so became politically irrelevant. Yet a revolution is in fact overdue in the universities. There is nothing more appalling than the sight of enormous aggregations of students religiously writing down pearls of wisdom that can be found more succinctly and profoundly put in dozens of books. There is nothing more pathetic than to behold the proliferation of social-science non-subjects in which the body of solid knowledge proffered stands usually in inverse ratio to the scientific pretensions upheld. Whole sections of the universities could be closed down for a year or two, and the result, far from being the disaster to civilization which some appear to anticipate, would probably be beneficial. Unfortunately, this is about the last thing that is likely to happen, for it is precisely the non-subjects, the fads, and the bogus sciences to which the "radicals" in their quest for social relevance are attracted as if by magnetic force. As for the consequences of all this, one thing can be predicted with certainty: those to be most directly affected by the new dispensation in the universities will emerge from the experience more confused and disappointed than ever, and more desperately in need of certain truths, firm beliefs.

An American youth movement was bound to occur sooner or later; youth revolt is a natural phenomenon, part of the human condition. But the particular direction the American movement would take was not at all foreordained, and it is therefore doubly sad that in its extreme form it has taken a destructive course, self-defeating in terms of its own aims. It seems fairly certain at this point that the American movement will result in a giant hangover, for the more utopian a movement's aims, the greater the disappointment which must inevitably ensue. The cultural and political idiocies perpetrated with impunity in this permissive age have clearly gone beyond the borders of what is acceptable for any society, however liberally it may be structured. No one knows whether the right-wing backlash, so long predicted, will in fact make its dreadful appearance; perhaps we shall be spared this reaction. It is more likely that there will be a backlash from within the extremist movement itself, as ideas and ideologies undergo change and come into conflict with underlying attitudes. Insofar as those attitudes are intolerant and irrational, they will not quickly mellow, and for that reason America is likely to experience a great deal more trouble with its *enragés.*

The American youth movement of the 60's, infected by the decadence of the age, missed the opportunity to become a powerful agent of regeneration and genuine social and political change. But decadence, contrary to popular belief, is not necessarily a fatal disease. It is a phase through which many generations pass at various stages of their development. The boredom that gives rise to decadence contains the seeds of its own destruction, for who, after a time, would

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not become bored with boredom? In 1890, the prevailing mood in France was expressed in the term *fin de siècle;* the most popular sport was national self-degradation; and everyone was convinced that the decay of the country had reached its ultimate stage. Charles Gide, the economist, compared France with a sugarloaf drowning in the sea. Fifteen years later the crisis was suddenly over. Almost overnight, pessimism was transformed into optimism, defeatism into aggressive nationalism, a preoccupation with eroticism into a new enthusiasm for athletics. No one knew exactly why this happened: French society and politics remained essentially the same, the demographic problem was still in full force, moral and religious uncertainties were as rampant as before. I do not mean to suggest that recovery is always so certain; indeed, the form the cure takes is sometimes almost as bad as the disease. But generations seldom commit collective suicide. As they rush toward the abyss, a guardian angel seems to watch over them, gently deflecting them at the very last moment. Nevertheless, even the patience of angels must not be tried too severely.

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Power in the Academy

A Reminiscence & a Parable

Dorothy Rabinowitz

I DO NOT know what became of the graduate students who sat numb with listening in the years between 1958 and 1968—no doubt, some of them are still waiting for dissertation topics to be approved—but perhaps a memory of them and what they saw will go a way in explaining the confrontation malaise of their heirs. They would not have believed, I think, the picture of Dean Epps hustled down a flight of Harvard stairs by seven grim, be-buttoned types guiding him by the arm and shoulders in classic bouncer fashion. Or the sight of S. I. Hayakawa, standing on top of an automobile in beret, flailing back at hands that raged to topple him. Hayakawa: he was the first principle of graduate school. *Language in Action was* graduate school, it was the primer for linguistics required of all graduate students in English and one no more thought that that book, nor the exotic personage who authored it, had any more to do with the reality of flesh and blood than the tall not always gentle old scholar who owned early American literature and some part of Henry James in my graduate school, who was accorded a reverential ear, a note-scribbling busyness almost dear to the memory in the light of the revolution now upon us.

That they would not have believed the new reality means only that no one had ever done these things before, and graduate students were committed, if temporarily, to history and precedent and wildly speculative only in matters of literary interpretation—but not too much of that. But if they could not have predicted the future, that does not mean that as things developed, such behavior would not have answered something, however repressed or dimly felt, about their sense of things.

The present abandon on campus, which finds much of its following in graduate students, had its antecedents. One saw the very peculiar psychic tricks graduate students were able to play on themselves for years on end. The scholar who lectured us on early American literature was also head of the English department, a sadistic man whose ordinary performances, if recorded, taped, and played back, would be tossed out as lacking in verisimilitude. His tactics were those of a crude bully, nothing subtle about them. To boot, he was a paranoid man who, quite simply, lied whenever it suited him. Everyone knew. Yet somehow, it was necessary for the generations of English graduate students who went through the fire, to perceive him, not as a weak man, but as a crusty embodiment of the New England conscience, tough and no nonsense, but way down deep—he *knew*. He knew something about real value; they did not quite catch what it was, but if only he found it in them, they were confirmed in something. Because he was so harsh, he knew something. Because he was so openly destructive—he delighted in bullying men who had spent nine or ten years under him, laughing (quite maniacally) at his power to do so if they showed any evidence of disobeying his wishes; he boasted of having driven a doctoral candidate to suicide, in a moment of musing self-amazement which betrayed not the least remorse—and they thought he knew something. To all the things he did, the graduate students, even the ones he set to vomiting nervously after a session with him, yielded respect: "a real man." Uncompromising, they found him, and a real man.

Somewhere in *The Liberal Imagination*, Lionel Trilling notes that to Americans, reality is harsh and unyielding, that which is tough and must be pushed up against. That went some way in explaining to me, at least, the peculiar perversity of these serious men and women, humanistically inclined, who so needed to distort their own visions. What better way to deal with the authority of power flourishing sadism they beheld with their own eyes and ears, than to see it as a marvelous cultural exoticism denied to them—realness, crusty and uncompromising—Billy Budd on the yardarm. They understood Billy Budd's executioner all too well, in ways that would have surprised Melville himself, I think.

But the realness which was not theirs, which they found so admirable in the excesses of the Head, as I shall call him—even when he compared himself, at a large meeting of English graduate faculty and students, with Machiavelli, unsmiling and in dead earnest as he outlined before five hundred people what he did to anyone who tried to deceive him—does not truly explain all

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their willingness to admire him. It was one thing for graduate students, many of them men with families who devoted years to the pursuit of the degree, to understand the power of the man and to fear it, indeed to knuckle to it if necessary. It was quite another thing to admire, as they so deeply did, the sheer abandon of all limits to social behavior, to call plain cruelty by all the names they called it: good ego, honesty, courage.

It was sad then, and it is sadder now, to understand how decent, sensitive men lusted after the fascistic temperament. Yet it is not hard to connect that not deeply hidden attraction to carefree aggression with the graduate students who today are assenting in the crudest assaults on the dignity, the very persons, of academic authorities, heads, deans—luminaries in whose presence just a few years ago they would have turned themselves inside out with humility, nervous giggles at little bons mots which were not always funny —though many were.

Somewhere, one knew, that nervous giggle would have its underside—but never this dark coin of vengeance, in accordance with the most elementary principles of the passive-aggressive phenomenon in the psychoanalytic casebook. At times, one had hoped for an underside; still, one remembered all the kind, amusing men who taught graduate classes, taught *me* well, if remotely. Intimacy was not necessary. But that they were never quite accorded the principled adulation that fell to the Head was perversity itself. There were a few people who did see. These knew the simplest of all principles, understood the dynamics of such men: while they could not bear opposition and would punish it any way possible, they were infinitely crueler to those who seemed to love their tyranny, to those who accepted with endless passivity. Those people set off the excesses of sadism in the man, while those who taunted him were rewarded with a strange blindness. He did not see, he did not hear. One said outrageous things to him, and he responded with flattery and pleasantry.

It is not in the least comforting to understand this phenomenon in the light of the passivity, the endless yielding of intelligence on campus to the most extravagant demands of the student rioters. What was clear in graduate school was that one day, perhaps, those who incorporated the strange values one saw them sniffing after in the Head, would either be destroyed in the system which rewarded such men—or would come to be such men. That was only a few years ago and that man was no accident; he was the product and the perpetrator of a system which rewarded just such men with power and longevity in office. It was the reward for aggression, as every schoolboy I knew *knew*—in a discipline, a calling which was otherwise (so it seemed) low in the virile-activist scale. It was no secret, indeed, that the man was such a bad scholar that satires were written, if elliptically, on the errors in his published scholarship. As everyone cheerfully admitted, he was a dreadful teacher. No matter. It was precisely that he said to them, nakedly, simply: this chosen profession is full of the powerless and the emotionally disenfranchised, an uninhibited aggression will take one far. They learned that it was clever to call the Ph.D. the meal ticket, to admire a flashy nihilism, that "publish or perish" meant just that. He appealed to their envy, their passivity, and their strange sense of realness, and (to them) all the frequently humane and intelligent men around him were less than he.

The people now yielding to student riots, joining them, are products of those graduate-school worlds in which the Heads prospered. Only, those calling the shots are students who, like the Head, are incited most by extremes of passivity. Hayakawa said, on a recent television interview, that a good part of the disorders came from "confused" people teaching the students, a kindly phrase offered with some irony, which could be taken to mean that teachers actively incited, or were really confused about what they *were* supposed to be doing in a riot of revolution.

The last possibility seems more likely, with an amplifying comment. One remembers that whole generations of teachers—the very ones offering tacit, if nervous, approval to the depredations of SDS, when they are not seeking admission to their flying wedge formations, who, if they were to be called Brother at a black student meeting, that would be this year's kingdom of heaven—were helped along to their present state of tremulous consistency by the graduate schools. Qualifications for responsible leadership—I am not sure why scholars and teachers should have credentials for *political* leadership—were severely impaired in those who were ground down, and sent out to jobs, by years of respectful awe for power which was never theirs. It is not too much to say that these now yearn after the same ruthless "character," the *realpolitik* of the student rioters, which they and their counterparts found themselves forced to admire in the self-willed Head. Why else would they refuse, so pitifully many of them, to defend their positions—at least their hapless libraries? Alas, they do not believe in their authority, because they have learned that *real* authority is tough and savage and gives no quarter—and that, at least, is far more the result of the reality malaise Trilling noted than the occasional tyrant of the graduate school. After all, there were probably not many Heads like the one I knew, but I do not doubt that if his kingdom extended to include every graduate student in the country, a frightful cross-section of the graduate population would admire his realness.

It is the same cross-section all over the country in every university where something has happened—and everywhere, something has; every-

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where they are taking heady swallows of realness, the clenched fist, and getting stupid drunk, exactly what happens when one drinks, unaccustomed, on an empty stomach. Something has happened at last to those who suspected that nothing ever might; not surely, if one spent one's days in a university, always with the suspicion that there was something not quite real about this calling, not of the world—even not quite man's work. The campus revolution happened and the teachers joined.

Though one has to assume, for sanity's sake, that the Head, as I knew him, was unusual in the length and extravagance of his operations, the sheer numbers of his colleagues who excused and made him possible suggest a certain proportion of his brothers elsewhere. Academic novels never did him or his types justice, because academic novelists, perhaps wisely, realized that the pathology of the weak was far more believable and rewarding than the pathology of the powerfully corrupt. The peculiar talents of Bernard Malamud (*A New Life*) and Philip Roth (*Letting Go*)—very different talents, one hastens to say—did not lend themselves to such reality; both were committed, nonetheless, to the obverse of the reality principle Trilling defined: reality is what is weak, what trembles and threatens to disappear altogether when you push up against it.

One would like to conjecture about what the Pauls and the Gabes of Roth's graduate student world would do on campus now, but it seems frivolous; one has the newspapers and one sees what all their depression has come to. The hall adjacent to the New York University library was fire-bombed, with damages estimated at $250,000 and its millions of books saved by moments, which might have pained Malamud's hero Levin, if he had happened East—but we don't really know about that. A new life is a new life, and the revolution has in some way promised to those headed after graduate school to invisible lives in the classroom, lifetime crawls to promotion—activity. Somehow, in the explosion of riot and confrontation, when the smoke cleared and the debris settled, somehow they would land near the top. By accident, even.

When the president of Harvard called the police, after the deans had been carried out, Harvard faculty members were outraged. Hayakawa said in yet another interview (he would appear to be the only president ready to take on a university in addition to his own, whose subsided troubles do not appear to have made him gratefully silent) that these were "distorted psychological reflexes," that this was the cultural snobbery of faculty, that they "have to defend the students to find out reasons why they [the faculty] have got problems and grievances too."

Their own problems and grievances? Would that they were so healthy. One grants Dr. Hayakawa mostly the distorted psychological reflexes. Faculties are angry and alarmed when police are called, not alone because the campus has been traditionally off-limits to the civil authorities, but, one prefers to think, because so many heads are invariably bloodied in a police action. At Cornell, black students had guns and emerged from the Student Union building bedecked with cartridges, to the clenched-fist salutes of the SDS members stationed outside swooning approval. The black students have long understood the SDS mentality and acted on the principle of absolute rejection, offering the mailed fist for the hand of fellowship, and they were quite right; they are pursued by lovers heated by rejection, pressed by favors in response to their disdain and purity as in the most consummately medieval courtly tradition. In an imperfect but increasingly competent way, the SDS understands about the liberal faculty exactly what the black students understand about SDS, and *they* act accordingly.

One can but wonder when the faculties and other institution types will understand. They do not want police: how long will it be before guns are used, before anti-insurgent students and takeover students clash, with fatal results? In the medieval university the decani *were* the heads of university troops, whose real function was to keep peace among warring student orders. But the decani of yesterday who were the mainstay of the tradition that civil authority belonged not on the campus, are not the deans of today. These are being carried downstairs and exiting through windows, and the wars are not private. Bloodied heads may yet be dead bodies before the tradition is yielded up. The lovers of the real in the academy have too often, as I understood them, not loved the real, which is painful, which asks the hard nerve of thought and the sacrifice of image. That sense of reality will come only after some irreversible tragedy, a student confrontation which will end in a few deaths. It is not necessary to add that it will be too late then for the civil authorities, for the realization that yielding the no-police-on-campus principle, and the roughing up of students which follows, is far less tragic. One likes to think, anyway, that it is not necessary to add that. If yielding to the strongarm absolute temper on campus answers something deep in those who teach there, if standing by, all unsurprised as wild concessions are made, is a psychic habit, one need add nothing. One may, of course, understand.

On campus today, at Berkeley, at San Francisco, at Rutgers, at Los Angeles, are my colleagues of the graduate school. It was always nearly impossible to get a job in the big New York universities and colleges, Ph.D. or not. Those held out for the good, publishing, non-New York scholar, for a variety of reasons. And so, men who needed jobs went away with their Ph.D.'s and their fam-

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ilies, or alone, to teach at Los Angeles State, Alaska, too—but California was the big state, with its complex of universities and expanding faculty needs. They were lonely out there, they often said, in the strange communities far from New York. But they are part of the faculty on campus now, out there, and some of the lucky ones were settled in the New York City University system, by order of special merit.

AFTER A particularly raw encounter at one of the New York city colleges recently, one of them explained soberly to me that he had joined the strike to oust the white head of the SEEK program—a pity, because he was a fine man who had devoted himself to the program and done an excellent job—but, he nodded reflectively, heads would roll inevitably to accommodate the black revolution. One supported it. He explained the difficulty they had, however, in finding a black teacher on campus who could take the job so precipitously open. Finally, they found someone in Romance Languages, a Puerto Rican. Thank heavens, he exclaimed with some wryness, they had one around. What was to happen to the man who had devoted himself specifically to the SEEK program these past years; did no one care that the program was in indifferent hands? You don't understand, I was told, that yielding to the demands, helping them win power, was as important as any real activity of the SEEK program: it was the revolution itself.

One understood that. Rather, one understood how he understood it so well. One expects that there are men on campus who know that the black revolution is best served by critical involvement rather than by parochial obedience, who act accordingly; but the higher visibility belongs to those teachers who have merely exchanged one authority for another. Eight years ago in these pages, Theodore Solotaroff explored the graduate student in profile and discovered, underlying the whole graduate-student process, the "deep desperation of the students' private life."* A lot of that, he decided, was plain penury, but at the end of the article, he concluded:

> However rebellious he may have been at the outset, the man who emerges from graduate school . . . has moved in the direction of accepting the scholarly image. Exploited by a research or teaching job . . . subjected, disarmed by the genteel authoritarianism of the academic will . . . he has become habituated to the feeling that the deeper questions of personal purpose are not worth asking and that the risks of intellectual freedom, passion, and non-conformity are not worth taking. . . . He has become more narrow, diligent and cautious in his ideas, more respectable in his style of thinking . . . more politic in his behavior . . . whether he will still possess a capacity for breadth, inwardness, and risk taking . . . whether he will be fit for the intellectual community . . . all of this is another question.

That Mr. Solotaroff questioned in 1961 and it is still a question; it is odd that it should be so in the midst of a revolution when purpose, and deeper questions, risks, appear to be the consuming passions on campus. The campus has moved to a far more concrete confrontation on the question of fitness in the intellectual community than existed in 1961. Now the risk-taking has to do not with scholarship politics but with a real acting-out of the expulsion fantasy of graduate school, real fears with real results. One can be jeered off campus and out of the classroom for risking an unrespectable inwardness—crossing picket lines, refusing to have one's classroom liberated. One can, if not diligent and cautious in the ways of the revolution, be punched in the mouth. For assertions of intellectual non-conformity, like saying that something lacks in the demand that all black and Puerto Rican students be admitted to colleges on request—something lacks in intelligence—one can be punished with the racist label, and all kinds of social disapproval from students, which can be powerful indeed. Perhaps worse than all of that, the teacher need just be called fink by his students and that hurts, not strangely; it hurts the young and the old instructor, perhaps even more than the graduate teacher who found his scholarship "not quite sound." Still, both are saying the same thing to him: "Go—you are not one of us." To the rejectee of authoritarianism, the threat of loneliness and the call of envy do not change in their power to distort vision; only the authoritarian fashion changes. Which is why the questions of 1961 are still with us, appearances notwithstanding.

THE PURIST passion which the graduate students exhibited had nothing to do with politics. It was the integrity of literature they were defending; the heresies were interpretational, the magic circle to which they begged admission a community of traditional scholars. At first glance, it seems not such a poor aspiration; there are many worse choices to be made in the world. The one I saw was memorable and moving, in a way, because one knows it helped them as little to incorporate the passions of the scholar-ego as it does now to incorporate the ego, the passions, the prohibitions of the Movement. Then as now, parochialism did something to the intellectual function, not the least of which was the loss of objectivity. Then as now, just as ironically, years of pledging to the order brought no admission to its ranks, nor did heated activities of devotion bestow authority or grace. Then as now, graduate students, instructors, refused to learn that authority—not alone the Heads—does not wish to share or to bestow power, that it lives off the servile. That is how it got to be authority, and it has no intention of offering peerdom.

* "The Graduate Student: A Profile," December 1961.

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Imitators of the master teacher, whether in the classroom or in the revolution, have always managed to muck up even the good parts. Disciples in the graduate school were full of a fervor that, I daresay, surprised the most hidebound of teachers occasionally for its sheer, unregenerate hatred of the enemy. The enemy (one remembers wistfully again, it was only literary criticism) to the graduate student of my day was the Freudian analysis of literature. Sometimes it was the New Critics, but nobody got sick over them, at least not as much.

I WELL remember the strange class lectures by an eminent scholar of Emily Dickinson—a rather attractive, rationalistically tempered man in his early fifties, whose lectures were always a model of urbanity and ease, with modest wit. At the end of his bibliographical introductions to the recent scholarship on Dickinson, his face began to harden, a blush came, a subtle red which was to get deeper, his voice lower with intensity as he recited certain recent assertions about the life of Emily Dickinson: she wore a white dress always; she refused to see people and she lived like a recluse, unwilling to open her door; she did lower a basket from her window, on occasion, to receive tokens. To this list, he added one after another piece of biographical data, each more strangely descriptive than the last, ending finally with a tribute to the depth of her impassioned love affair with the Reverend, which lasted for so many years by mail and whom, the lecturer added quietly, she had met once. And for that and other things he said, icily, shaking his head, certain scholars have seen fit to bestow upon her a set of clinical neurotic symptoms, rather than to see her for what she was: "a poet, a woman, living very much the typical life of the young woman of her time. There was nothing unusual in her life habits for her time, let the Freudians build what they may."

Having discharged the matter thus, he went on calm, all passion spent, to discuss the works of Miss Dickinson. But for the very large class in American literature which heard those curious assertions of Emily Dickinson's health—her depression, her isolation, her preoccupation with death—the war had only just begun. Resentments smoldered and the scholar had builded better than he knew. Perhaps that is unfair, upon reflection; so many of the graduate students entering the scholarly world came already passionate in their defense of the past, the wholeness of tradition against the barbarian new. The paranoia of the liberal arts, as one was wont to call it, was a powerful stimulant, the equivalent of militant community pride in the library stacks. The enemy was all around us, the flower destroyed by an inimical new science.

That class in which Emily Dickinson was taught went giddy with approval, nods and smiles, which had nothing to do with currying favor; for the assault on psychoanalytic interpretation met with a deep psychological accord in people who believed that virtue resided with tradition, that authority resided with a virtuous defense of tradition—and, strangest of all, that tradition derived its strength from simplicity.

If Emily Dickinson was curious, it is almost painful to remember classes in Walt Whitman. One scholar taught a course in Melville and Whitman which he began by announcing his own Freudian analytic bias. It seemed strange that one should do that, but as the weeks went on, the gesture seemed not the least bit superfluous. It had been, in effect, a warning that some might wish to leave. Some few did, but a very great many stayed to fight, and with an astonishing passion. Week after week the course met, the often fanciful interpretations, both Jungian and Freudian, tossed bravely out to smoldering faces in the lecture hall. One woman turned herself inside out with rage weekly, and when finally it was asserted that the poems of Whitman really had a homosexual component, she could no longer content herself with mere disagreements and don't-you-think-that's. She uncoiled herself from the seat and sprang, trembling, to assert that the class was a travesty, the lecturer unfit to teach literature in a university. They had not come to hear trash. She sat down to a round of applause which, if not contributed by everyone, was nonetheless impassioned. She had not been alone, as, indeed, all semester long, students had risen with enraged hands waving aggressions, breaking the usual polite tradition of listening one had seen in their other classes. One watched, and wondered at whom they were so angry, and why. One woman responded to a clinical reading of Whitman's poem celebrating young men bathing by slamming shut her book and walking out, a look on her face as though someone had just reflected on the legitimacy of her birth. At the end of the stormy term, the instructor, to my surprise, admitted to me that he was indeed astonished by the ferocious *personal* assaults—one was not used to admissions of anything that was painfully there—and he could not account for it.

Of course, one could account for it, though it hardly helped matters. Who did not know that when one incorporated as one's own the ego and the identity of a powerful authority, the dictates of that authority would assume the excesses of any other emotional tyranny? What had it, after all, to do with an exchange of ideas? What had it to do with ideas at all? It was identification, it was absolute belief, and if the absolutes were interchangeable one ought not be too surprised if the defense of poetry yielded, when they left to teach, to the defense of New Left purism. The fellowship in both cases is warm with rightness. If smug, if it borders occasionally on downright

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intolerance, now on approval of totalitarian commitment, the revolution at all costs, any heads, one need only remember what is being defended, how attractive the scholarly club seemed in graduate school, what emotional needs it answered, what the revolution-clubbiness answers now.

Perhaps a final parable detail: an eminent scholar in 17th-century literature dealt quietly but firmly with William Empson's *Seven Types of Ambiguity*. One student, taking arms, submitted a triumphant paper dwelling much on Rosamund Tuve's rebuttal of that critic, a charming demolition job called *A Reading of George Herbert*. The student, of course, citing Miss Tuve as authority, had gone her one better. He called Empson a liar, a plagiarist, a fool, in the paper, which was returned to him with several curt conjectures on the state of the student's mental health, his honor, his capacity for scholarship, his ability to read. Also appended was a small note on some of the merits of Empson's contributions which he, the graduate student, would do well to understand.

It was an unusual performance for the graduate faculty, one of the few expressions of shock and impatience with the zealot personality. The student, understandably, was even more shocked, confused beyond comfort. Had he not taken the right side? Had the enemy been accepted, for all his sins, as a contributor to scholarship? It was a deep surprise, and, one hoped, a kind of enlightenment—but there is no proof that it was.

TO RETURN to the revolution: now, this September, nine graduate students paraded outside New York University's Graduate School of Social Work. They were the graduate students in defense of John Hatchett, whose contributions to the life of the mind are by now well known. When his anti-Semitic rant finally drew blood, he was assisted out of the university, his contract terminated. A mourning band carried placards; five of the nine graduate students were Jewish, as they hastened to assure me. Across the street, in front of the main building of New York University was a noisy band of SDS, Youth Against War and Fascism, and assorted progressive undergraduates cheering them on. The vast number of New York University undergraduates refused to honor the picket line of one hundred, but between the graduate-student marchers and their young cheerleaders, a lonely fellowship trickled, a wave and a salute. One of the graduate supporters of Hatchett, arriving late, exchanged his books for a picket sign, raising a warm cheer from the striking undergraduates.

Here it may be suspected by some that I impugn the *motives* of the graduate students, and I hasten to assure them they are right. I impugn their motives, never mind their wisdom, question their purity and their integrity. There is no better thing to impugn in an activity—Jewish support of a Jew-baiting racist—the stupidity of which is *beyond* question. They want love and approval from the revolution: they will get the mailed fist.

Now the Cornell dean of faculty resigned, temporarily, because the faculty finally took umbrage at his concessions. Guns were the last straw, the faculty was angered, it was all finally too much for Clinton Rossiter and the faculty which, to everyone's surprise, rejected the dean's amnesty promises. He told the faculty that if they did not support his pledge to the black students he would be forced to resign; he had promised them. They did not support him, at first ballot at least, and he did resign. It is the nicest kind of purism which imposes its dictates on one's own activity alone, directs only one's own fate. It seemed a pity that he should have to go.

As it turned out, the faculty at Cornell reversed itself a day later, as black students promised Cornell had but three hours to live, and a real bloodbath seemed imminent. Ithaca police and sheriff's deputies mobilized, students asserted that they were ready to die, faculty members and their families were threatened. For these and other reasons, the faculty chose to yield on the discipline of five black students—an altogether understandable choice when violence promised to be so bad. All purist stances have the same attendant dangers, and it seemed the decision of thoughtful men that they should have backed off from this one (though a number of faculty called it abject surrender and a few resigned). What was neither thoughtful nor understandable was President Perkins's pronouncement that this was "the greatest progressive step forward in Cornell history . . . a victory."

A true victory in the spirit of the Arab military bulletin. It is among the oldest disguises of helplessness; but worse, a growing capacity for self-deception among academic heads which alarms considerably more than any yielding of principle. If yet one more proof were needed of the effects of endless placating of the jackboot temper, one need only consider Dr. Perkins's reception by the militant leaders after he had conceded: "Then Dr. Perkins was kept waiting, red-faced and discomforted while Eric Evans, a leader of the Afro-American Society, mocked him. 'You know what just happened up there?' Mr. Evans told the crowd with a laugh. 'He put a grandfatherly arm around my shoulder and then said: "Sit down, I want to talk." ' President Perkins was kept waiting while Mr. Evans finished his speech. . . ." (New York *Times*, April 24.)

On the same day, Dr. Buell Gallagher of New York's City College met Negro and Puerto Rican students, agreeing to their demands thus: "I trust I will be permitted to sleep in my house tonight," he smiled. "I agree wholeheartedly with all your demands. I put my job on the line." That seems right. Jobs are being put on the line left and right in an orgy of sincerity; one hopes that the

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college heads will not soon begin denouncing each other—or themselves—for counterrevolutionary activity. The excess of piety in which they swim seems right, so long as it is their own jobs they yield up. When Dr. Gallagher agrees wholeheartedly to a quota system which reflects the black and Puerto Rican population in the city high schools, he is swearing by his own career to affect the careers and the lives of non-black, non-Puerto Rican students who happen to have legitimately high averages, to whom the free city college is still the only way to college. Such displays of personal honor, such self sacrifice, have always claimed large scores of victims, and it promises to be no different here and now.

"I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue," said Milton in another context. But what if that is all the virtue there is, in the noisy assent to the revolution? Better fugitive than none at all, better cloistered than blinded by the tyranny of new light: two and two is five, losing is really winning, day is night, quota systems are now *just*. It is as virtuous to stand up for the new wave—it takes as much courage to call for the repudiation of ROTC* as it did to call for the repudiation of Joe McCarthy before the assembled ADA. Far stronger, it seems, to hold to a fugitive virtue, and considerably more dangerous, as faculty will testify who did not lend themselves to the teachers' strike at San Francisco State.

AT SAN FRANCISCO State, a red armbanded professor of English who had marched on the picket lines the length of the strike explained himself touchingly—describing a set of symptoms which were nonetheless chilling for being understandable: "I was a good boy in the academy, a graduate of Harvard, I even wrote three books, always a good academic boy. One day, the Hayakawa loudspeakers were blaring that this was an illegal strike and two big black boys hoisted me up on their shoulders, and I spoke. You know the feeling, the adrenalin pours into you, the beautiful feeling. I addressed the crowd and did very well. Then I went to a faculty senate meeting and they were just talking and I left that . . . I walked to the stacks to look for a book and I just started to cry. I remembered the times when the part of me that I admired—I am some part a private man, things I liked about myself, the quiet hours of lonely writing. I cried for that part. . . . I know only that if I had refused to join the strike, I would have no right to teach in the classroom . . . it seems strange to say this, but I like my students better than my colleagues. This is *life*. I say those who did not join, who didn't partake, actually chose a kind of death." (NBC, April 22.)

To the deeply earnest man who said this, a little wistful ("I'm forty years old . . . maybe I should have gone after my first ambition to be another Ted Williams . . . my students don't want to hear about T. S. Eliot"), one knew there *were* no visible alternatives. The life he perceived, the *real* he saw, the hard activism of crowd purpose, came to nourish the person starved by the invisible life, the private writing man. One understands how men are driven from inwardness to the company of the revolution—and one can only regret the tyranny of that aimlessness and loneliness which presses a thoughtful man to the belief that *real* life is standing out there on the students' shoulders—and that death comes to those whose inwardness dictates some withholding from the rages which pass for real life. It is strange, but old, not archaic; Forster's lesson will always seem necessary, the Schlegel sisters will be around on every campus to learn over and over again that the world of telegrams and anger is no more the real life than were the books and the music which disappointed them with insufficiency. The insufficiencies of the professor's life—he is not alone—the disappointments, are understandable, the perverse new vision of the real, distressing—as all revenge upon one's own experience is; for that revenge is the source of the vision.

One's career was not sufficient for the whole needs of life; one's private, cherished values were lonely ones; therefore, none of it was good, nor the academic birthplace, and one should have been Ted Williams (not a strange choice, that strong private man who needed no fans). Fortunately, there is the revolution. One has no doubt that the professor really means that there is a kind of death, psychological death, if one refuses the apparent life of the revolution. When one has felt at last that adrenalin, that community one has never had, one is being offered a chance, and it is perceived as the last chance of all—to live, real.

Unfortunately, the graduate schools did not teach, along with everything else, the proposition that a lifetime career in a university might not answer the whole needs of life (what career does?)—if it did answer some very special part of one; that one might find oneself with a degree and three books written, lonely, and in quest of a reality which was really real. But, as everyone knows, people have always gone to school, clung to institutions for things the institution could not possibly provide. That is true of teachers as well as students, it is true of revolutions as well as institutions.

If there is a lost generation it is not the very young, but the vast numbers of academics exiting from graduate schools in quest of a new reality, a new authority—and those, alas, will always be available. Like no other occupation, the life of the university teacher is burdened with expecta-

* For this writer's money they can have ROTC and academic credit for it, so long as they are giving academic credit for volley ball and marching around in gym suits. Both contribute not heavily to higher education.

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tions, promises of grace which will not be met, prestige which will not nourish, a special career arrangement of work and the beautiful, which often seems neither to be beautiful nor to be work. Perhaps more than any other calling, it is capable of disappointing deeply.

THERE ARE something short of 400,000 graduate students now, in 281 graduate schools in the country; it will be a large generation, subject to pressures from stranger sources than ever have come to the campus, stranger than their own necessities. It is everyone's new morality. When Secretary Finch of Health, Education, and Welfare joins in with his new consciousness, the latest rallier to progressivism: "The universities brought unrest upon themselves . . . attempting to serve many masters"—"a splendid statement, a really splendid analysis," said Frank Thompson, Democrat of New Jersey. "Perceptive," echoed William Steiger, Republican of New Jersey. One knows how many years they must have waited, only for the appropriate time to discharge their wisdom on this matter.

The lashings of newborn consciousness are familiar, their targets predictable. Now, out-reforming the academic reformers, Finch says the universities are "perhaps the least responsive to changes in American society . . . the faculty with tenure one of the most privileged classes in the world." Indeed, I had always thought those particular honors went to the permanent heads of House committees. One might at least consider that people who have won tenure have in some way contributed to the sum of the world's knowledge. What the chairmen who adorn, apparently for life, the Senate and the House have contributed to the world's knowledge is best left unknown; one suspects the world's knowledge would be immeasurably enriched by its subtraction.

There was, as Marianne Moore says, never a war which was not inward. The academy has its old real enemies within and without, the darkness and the self-deception, the totalitarian impulse crusading as light. Those have always been available, as real as any enemy has ever been. But if the graduate students and the professors are looking for external confrontation in quest of the real, they should do well to form their own cadres and dislodge their own enemies—and *they* are not lurking around student barricades, nor are they up against that fabulous wall.

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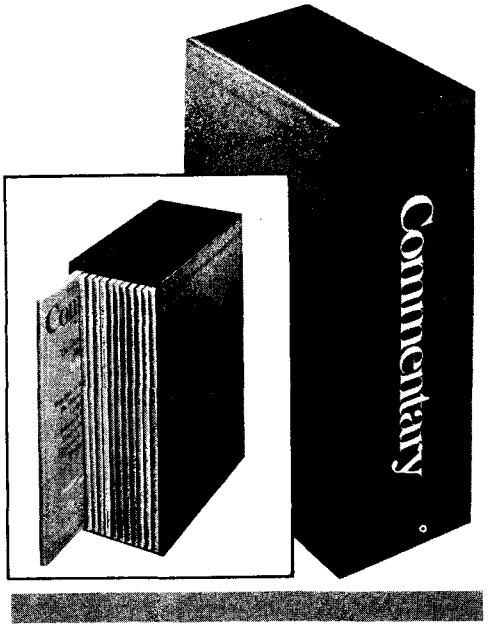

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World Politics, 1969

George Lichtheim

LONDON, MAY.—The second anniversary of the Six-Day War supplies as good a peg as any on which to hang some remarks about the current Middle Eastern turmoil. Starting from the Israel-Arab confrontation one can move on to more general thoughts about the region. From there the road leads to the recent upheaval in Pakistan. Thereafter we shall follow the example of Comrade Mao and embark upon a Long March northward, until we reach the frontier separating the People's Republic of China from the USSR. And so, by a semicircular movement, back to where we started, for Soviet expansion in the Middle East has become a factor in the politics of the region. It has also had repercussions on the other side of the Mediterranean: in Greece, Spain, Italy, and France. Which brings one to NATO and the recent improvement in American-French relations: the latter phenomenon running parallel—to the surprise of some people—with Mr. Nixon's earnest efforts to promote what the Chinese and their friends have come to describe as "collusion" between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Now if this kind of collusion exists, it is likely to manifest itself in a joint attempt to impose some kind of peace or at least an armistice upon the belligerents in the Middle East. This may or may not occur. If it does, we shall have proof that some sort of global understanding between the U.S. and the USSR is actually in the making. I reveal no secret when I say that this prospect is viewed with alarm not only by the pro-Chinese section of the New Left, but by a number of people closer to the political and ideological center of affairs. If the adherents of Maoism, Castroism, or "libertarian socialism" think they have a monopoly of nervous apprehension concerning what they would doubtless term a "global sell-out," they are mistaken: the Gaullists and Herr Franz Josef Strauss are equally suspicious, albeit for different reasons. Even the British are a trifle alarmed at the thought of the Big Two getting closer together. So far as the Middle East is concerned, London and Paris are indeed being consulted. They may even mobilize regional forces so as to give extra weight to their own utterances. But this looks like being an exception. The probable shape of things to come is more clearly reflected in the currently fashionable game of trying to determine the future relationship between the two nuclear superpowers and China.

All of this, needless to say, is cold comfort to the interested parties on the spot: in this case the Israelis and the Palestinian Arabs. If they have something in common (and they may yet discover that they have quite a lot in common), it is a determination to settle their deadly quarrel locally and at gun-point. If it were only a matter of guns in the literal sense of the term, they would probably get away with it. Who cares about guns? Nowadays the combatants might as well be armed with bows and arrows, for all the difference it makes to the Big Two (or Three). But there are rumors floating about that Israel and Egypt may shortly be able to escalate beyond artillery duels, in which case the superpowers will have to step in. So far this is mere talk, some of it probably put about with the intent of scaring what is known as public opinion. It certainly has no relevance to terrorism and police operations, which is what the Israelis and the Palestine Arab nationalists are actually engaged in. Even so, this kind of talk may not be entirely hollow.

It is perhaps better just now to ignore these speculations and stick to the plain facts of the case. Logically and psychologically, what happens at ground level, so to speak, is all that really matters to the people who in the end will have to make a political settlement: the Israelis and the Arab nationalists. This is going to become easier in the measure in which the Palestine Arabs acquire a new kind of identity and stop relying on the empty boasts and promises of political clowns like Nasser. Unfortunately the instrument they have chosen to affirm their presence—terrorism—is counter-productive in that it sets up an unending cycle of vengeance and mutual hatred. None of these factors is calculable and measurable, which is why outsiders, however well-intentioned, commonly go wrong in predicting the next move. There is perhaps some substance in the quaint logic of the bitter-enders on both sides who believe that "in the end we shall get together—after we have fought each other to a standstill." The trouble is that no one can work out in advance the psychological process through which the combatants will have to pass before they feel able to

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strike a bargain. That it will have to be struck locally, by those whose lives are immediately engaged, goes without saying. The powers can only hold the ring. But how long is the interval going to be? Bi-nationalism—the "obvious solution" to anyone who views the bloody struggle from the safety of his armchair—means different things to Israelis (even those among them who are tired of Zionism) and to Palestine Arabs who still think they can set up a state with a tolerated Jewish minority. Since this is the maximum their leaders are presently able to envisage, the daily battle goes on, and so does the accumulation of hostility. To get out of this vicious circle, the Palestine Arabs would have to concede the existence of Israel and this they have so far refused to do.

Nor have they been told the facts in plain language by those who claim to be their friends: the Russians and the French. Soviet diplomacy is hampered by fear of Maoist competition, by doctrinaire anti-Zionism, and by an ingrained habit of systematic lying that goes back to Tsarist days. Since Russian politicians seem unable to tell the truth even when it is in their interest (Khrushchev was an exception), it is no wonder that their Communist comrades in Eastern Europe no longer believe anything that comes out of Moscow (hence all those photographs of Chinese atrocities, solemnly communicated last March to *Western* governments by the Soviet Foreign Office, in the hope of finding a few takers). As for French policy, it is whatever Paris says it is at any given moment. In private de Gaulle is reputed to have told numerous Arab visitors that they must recognize Israel. In public the French government takes a line that can only encourage Arab revanchism, even though this is plainly not what Paris wants. The whole performance is dictated by misleading analogies with Algeria, and by a failure to understand that Israeli nationalism is something quite different from "colonialism." For that matter, those Parisian leftists who have thrown in their lot with what they are pleased to call the "Arab liberation movement" are making exactly the same mistake.

This is the place to say a few words about one of the more learned and reputable among these theorists: M. Maxime Rodinson, whose book *Israel and the Arabs** is occasionally cited as a serious study on the subject. A former Communist of Jewish origin (his father was a pioneer of the Jewish labor movement in France before 1914), and an Orientalist who holds a chair at the Sorbonne, Rodinson is the ideal-typical spokesman for people who would like to believe that "Arab socialism" is what it purports to be: a "progressive," democratic, nonsectarian movement embodying the virtues of patriotism, anti-imperialism, and everything else that is honorable and forward looking. An indoor Marxman with a line of salestalk suitably attuned to the present intellectual atmosphere in Paris, Rodinson manages to sound reasonable even when he is talking arrant nonsense. Having abandoned Stalinism in favor of Mao-and-water, he has naturally been taken up by that section of the New Left which looks to the Third World for the solution of its own problems. And since he is by profession an Islamist—indeed professor of Ancient South Arabian Languages, no less—he is regarded as an authority even by people who do not share his political credo.

THE TROUBLE with Rodinson, to put it in plain language, is a notable lack of ordinary good sense. Perhaps one ought not to make too much of the fact that at the time of Stalin's celebrated "Doctor's Plot" in 1953 he was foremost among those French intellectuals who howled for the blood of the accused (all of them Jews, as it happened). Writing in the Stalinist *Nouvelle Critique* in February of that year, Rodinson—no schoolboy, but even then nearing his fortieth birthday—swallowed whole the entire monstrous pack of demented lies coming out of Moscow, and for good measure affirmed that Zionism was a school of treason (*"par le sionisme la trahison pénétrait dans le monde socialiste"*) and Israel a racist state kept in being by the Washington Export-Import bank to serve as an agency of American imperialism. Since those crazy days Rodinson of course has learned a thing or two. Having finally crawled out of the Stalinist madhouse, he has performed a kind of painless lobotomy upon himself and in the process transmuted himself from a raving fanatic into a learned imbecile. Well-meaning, equipped with a fund of specialized knowledge, and wholly lacking in political sense, he is a sucker for anyone who comes along and fills his head with tall tales about "Arab socialism."

The book is what one might expect from a writer with this sort of background and mental training: neither genuine analysis nor straightforward propaganda, but a mixture of both, at an intellectual level just elevated enough to make readers wholly ignorant of the subject feel they are being offered a serious study, when in fact what they are getting is a piece of inferior political journalism. As a historian Rodinson does not exist. He cannot even get the simplest facts straight. Thus in his opening chapter on "Jewish Nationalism and Arab Nationalism," by way of explaining the Russian pogroms of the early 1880's, he tells his readers that "Tsar Alexander III decided to avenge the death of his father on the Jews (Alexander II was killed by revolutionaries in 1881; the assassins happened to be Jewish)." In actual fact the assassins happened *not* to be Jewish. What is more, their organization, the *Narodnaya Volya,* was just as anti-Semitic as the Tsarist authorities, if not more so. The imme-

* Translated by Michael Perl. Pantheon, 239 pp., $5.95.

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diate reaction of its Executive Committee to the police persecution which descended upon it after the assassination of Alexander II was to issue a manifesto to the Ukrainian peasants calling upon them to rise up against "the Jewish Tsar," the Jews, and the nobility, and massacre the lot of them. Since the early Russian Marxists later dissociated themselves from this form of populism, Rodinson need not have had any trouble with the topic—but then he knows nothing whatsoever about East European history. Besides, had he got this bit of information straight, he would have had to acknowledge the existence of racial hatred among the Russian peasantry and intelligentsia, and that would never do: it might give aid and comfort to the Zionists. Instead he chooses to remain in blissful ignorance of what really went on during those years. Almost the entire book is at the same level of intellectual cretinism and factual ignorance. And this fellow holds a chair at the Sorbonne and is hailed as an authority by the simpletons of the New Left!*

EVERY NOW and then his unflinching allegiance to the Arab cause gets Rodinson into trouble with his conscience as a humanist and a man of the Left. Thus in his chapter on "The Rise of Arab Socialism" he is made distinctly uncomfortable by the bestiality of the Ba'athist gang in charge of Iraq: a country riven by constant tribal warfare between the so-called government and the Kurdish minority. He gets out of his dilemma by making a hero of Nasser whose "socialist, Arabist, and anti-imperialist stand gave a new dynamism to these three guiding principles throughout the Arab world." Anyone acquainted with Marxism could have seen at a glance that Nasser's "socialism" was nothing but the ideology of the nascent Egyptian bourgeoisie. The Communists knew this, and said so, which is why Nasser kept them in jail. But at least he did not murder them, whereas the "Arab socialists" in Iraq . . . But let us hear Rodinson on this to him very embarrassing subject:

> The Army was united on a program of pan-Arab nationalism. . . . A military coup on 8 February 1963 . . . dethroned Kassem, who was killed. Power was taken over by a coalition of Nasserites and Ba'athists, with the latter at first in the dominant position. Conservative forces rejoiced at the abrupt disappearance of the danger of a gradual slide into Communism. A neo-Ba'athist militia was formed to hunt down suspected Communists and fellow-travelers; some 5,000 were slaughtered. This bloody settlement of accounts lanced the boil of five years' accumulated hatred and resentment. From their position of dominance, the Ba'athists then turned to the elimination of their Nasserite allies. Their pan-Arab nationalism caused them to step up the war against the Kurds, which became bitter and frequently horrific. . . .

Some socialism! What Rodinson does *not* tell his readers is (a) that the Ba'athist ideology (even in its less murderous Syrian form) is an exact copy of European fascism, down to the lunatic doctrine that "the Jews" invented capitalism, own all the banks in the world, and control the American government; (b) that the Ba'athist murder gangs who slaughtered the Communists in 1963 also terrorized and blackmailed the "conservative forces" whom he tries to saddle with the responsibility for these Hitlerite goings-on; (c) that they are still in power, contrary to his assertion that "the Ba'ath's reign in Iraq was brief," its military organization, the National Guard, having come into conflict with the Army. These distinctions may seem important to someone sitting in Saint-Germain-des-Prés. They are of no interest to the luckless inhabitants of Baghdad, as Rodinson would discover if he ever talked to them, or to some of the Arab student refugees from Iraq who cannot go back for fear of being murdered: like those former Ministers—Nasserites in Rodinson's terminology—whose headless bodies are occasionally fished out of the river, or discovered in some back alley. Hitler can be proud of his Arab pupils. What he could not have foreseen was that their principal French apologist would be a former Communist of Jewish parentage, safely ensconced in a professorial chair at the Sorbonne, and spinning yarns about "Arab socialism."

But enough of Maxime Rodinson and his asinine writings. The man is noteworthy only as a specimen of the genus *crétin distingué*: a splendid French phrase originally coined to interpret the magic letters "C.D." (*Corps Diplomatique*) which traditionally adorn the vehicles transporting ambassadors and other exalted personages from their offices to their private residences. No one—whatever his or her opinion about the rights and wrongs of the Palestine-Israel drama—need waste any time on Rodinson. The most that can be said in the book's favor is that the author's innocence is genuine and unfeigned. There is not an ounce of Machiavellianism in him. Considering his background, this circumstance at least must be notched up to his credit. †

* And not only by them. *La Pensée*, the weightiest of all the theoretical journals associated with the French Communist party, in its issue of December 1968 ran a lengthy essay on the Middle East in which Rodinson's *Israël et le refus arabe—75 ans d'histoire* (Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1968) was treated with great solemnity by a Communist writer named Jacques Couland: this despite the fact that Rodinson left the party in 1958 and is a shade too favorable to "Arab socialism" for the taste of his reviewer. The latter after all has to take account of the fact that the "Arab socialists" have hitherto distinguished themselves chiefly by massacres directed against—the handful of Arab Communists!

† Fortunately the reading public is not dependent on Rodinson's drivel. Anyone in quest of a brief authoritative study of Arab nationalism is herewith referred to Professor Bernard Lewis's work *The Middle East and the West* (London, Weidenfeld, 1968).

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II

WHAT OF the argument that Arab and Jewish left-wingers are already getting together on a supra-national basis and under the banner of Marxism-Leninism? In the first place, this is nothing new: various Communist parties in the Middle East have been preaching it for decades, and so far have got nowhere. Secondly, the only sizable Arab organization more or less committed to this kind of line—the "Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine"—is likewise committed to terrorism, guerrilla warfare, and the destruction of Israel as a state (although not of the Jewish community as such). It has *not* so far proposed genuine bi-nationalism, but still looks forward to the day when the Arab flag will fly over Jerusalem, whereas an authentically internationalist movement would presumably envisage the Israeli and Palestinian flags flying side by side. Finally, the PFLP is both faction-ridden and without real influence by comparison with the more traditional Al Fatah: lavishly subsidized by the oil-rich Arab states and backed by thousands of armed irregulars. "Al Fatah" literally signifies "triumph," and a military triumph over Israel is what its leaders are preaching. They have the money, the guns, and the men, whereas all the PFLP has is a handful of teachers and students, themselves torn between Maoists and radical nationalists. The recent "commando" raids on Israeli airliners were the work of the PFLP, which employs gunmen as well as ideologists and is thoroughly confused about its aims. The most one can say in its favor is that it is disliked by the Ba'ath and that some of its leaders regard themselves as Leninists, which suggests that they have gone beyond the mental level of the main body of Arab nationalism. But this kind of stuff goes down better with intellectuals than with the masses, who still cling to the Islamic tradition and look to Al Fatah to make an end of Israel.

For propaganda purposes all these outfits now draw a distinction between Zionism and Judaism. Their propagandists affirm that if only Israel stops being Zionist, all may yet be well. What they cannot or will not see is that Israel is a *nation*, and that the Israelis are not going to commit suicide for their benefit, though many are willing to cede most of the territory occupied in the 1967 war. Comparisons with Algeria or Vietnam are positively insane, yet this stuff is still being peddled by the PFLP and its Western sympathizers. Until someone knocks a little sense into their heads, it will be easier for the Israelis to come to terms with Al Fatah, which at least has some claim to represent the Palestine Arabs, doesn't care about Frantz Fanon, and will probably in the end accept some form of bi-nationalism: always provided the Arab governments do not start another round of fighting. Hitherto—and this bears repetition in view of the mendacious propaganda put out by its friends—Al Fatah has not got beyond promising to respect the existence of "an ethnic and religious Jewish community" in a Palestine Arab state. What such promises are worth (even if their authors mean what they say) can be inferred from the fate of other national or religious minorities in the Arab world: the Kurds for example.*

Does all this matter? Yes, for in the long run the only lasting settlement is going to be hammered out in secret meetings between the Israelis and the representatives of the Palestine Arabs. Both sides know it. Neither can proclaim it publicly: the Israelis because they have to pretend that Palestine-Arab nationalism does not really exist; their Palestinian opponents because they depend on subsidies which would dry up the moment there was talk of peace. Besides, a settlement that more or less satisfied the Palestine Arabs could only be reached at the expense of Syria and Egypt—especially Egypt. Now that Nasser has failed everywhere else, a war of revenge against Israel has become his sole *raison d'être*, and he is not going to be deflected from it, whatever advice he may be getting from the Russians (it is plain that just now they are not keen on another round). From a purely Egyptian viewpoint the return of Sinai and the reopening of the Suez Canal are clearly preferable to the pursuit of a lunatic vendetta against Israel. But Nasser is sitting on a powder-keg of his own creation: if he makes peace, the Cairo mob—spurred on by junior army officers and assorted fanatics—may unseat him, and he knows it. The same goes for his colleagues in Syria and Iraq. As for the wretched Hussein—a creation of the British Foreign Office, and like all such puppets doomed to early extinction—he is on the way out, whatever happens on the West Bank of the Jordan. The stone age is coming to an end even in his part of the world. Soon there will be no one left for Professor Toynbee to talk to outside Saudi Arabia, and one of these days even that ancient fortress of Islamic tradition—complete with black slaves, veiled women, and tribal warriors—may crumble into the desert sand.

In considering these matters it is useful to bear in mind that a good deal of what passes for straight reporting of Middle Eastern affairs is in fact disguised propaganda: mostly funneled through Lebanon by way of exchange professors and resident spies dressed up as newspaper correspondents. The case of Philby—Beirut corres-

* See the *Nouvel Observateur* of January 13, 1969, for the manifesto published on January 1 this year in Paris by the leadership of the self-styled "Mouvement de libération nationale palestinienne El Fatah." This document expressly affirms that Israel must disappear and that the Arab state to be erected on its ruins will only safeguard the Jewish population (or what is left of it after the massacre) *"en tant que communauté ethnique et religieuse"*—as an ethnic and religious community.

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pondent for the London *Observer,* confidant of the British Foreign Office, and Soviet spy to boot—has become celebrated, but the only noteworthy feature of his performance was his ability to pose as an ordinary agent, when in fact he was a double agent, if not a triple one—there are people who believe he was "really" betraying everyone else to the Arabs. The Levant being the kind of flea circus it is, almost anything in that line of business is possible. None of it has the smallest significance. As Winston Churchill used to say (and he should have known): "There are no secrets—everything of importance is in the newspapers" (I am quoting from memory). This is certainly true of the Middle East. Even the story about the Israelis manufacturing nuclear arms at Dimona, in the Negev, has now reached the public. The comic part of it is that—in the words of a well-informed specialist on the topic, Mr. Leonard Beaton—"for reasons best known to themselves, the French government built this plant secretly, arousing great suspicion both in the Arab countries and in the United States and Britain." By the time de Gaulle had changed course and imposed the arms embargo, matters had reached the point where Israel was credited with the ability to produce a few bombs per annum. Here in London it is generally believed that the Russians have hitherto kept quiet about it (a) so as not to embarrass the French and (b) to avoid being pestered with Arab requests for nuclear weaponry. Moscow apparently hopes that Washington will keep Israel under control, in exchange for a Russian promise to withhold nuclear arms from Nasser. It may work—and then again it may not.

THE MANEUVERING in and around the United Nations must be seen against this backdrop. From Israel's viewpoint it is of course irritating that France should vote with Russia and the Arabs. Viewed from Moscow, Cairo, or Algiers, the picture looks different. If the Russians are to keep France on their side, they have to tone down their anti-Israel propaganda. They may even have to urge their Arab protégés to recognize Israel, in exchange for a settlement restoring some of the lost territory to its former owners. None of this makes the task of the luckless Gunnar Jarring any easier; nor does it suggest any reason why genuine peace should come to the region in the foreseeable future. Sinai, or part of it, may be returned to Egypt; the West Bank may be converted into a self-governing buffer state (few of the Arabs living there want to go back to Jordanian rule, as personified by the grotesque Hussein and his British cronies of Arab Legion days). But terrorism may go on for years, and probably will. This, however, is something the powers can live with, just as they can live with its Cypriot counterpart, as long as Greece and Turkey—both members of NATO—don't come to blows over it. What they cannot safely tolerate is the spread of nuclear weaponry among the highly unstable Arab countries in the region. Some of these countries—Syria and Iraq, for example—are virtually ungovernable, and their rulers totally irresponsible. There is no ground for thinking that this state of affairs is going to alter over the next decade.

In the context of "competitive coexistence" between the U.S. and the USSR, this local instability may at any moment assume a guise highly unwelcome to the Russians, even though the Arab-Israeli conflict is worth keeping alive from Moscow's standpoint, since it facilitates Soviet expansion into the Mediterranean. Having more than replaced the equipment lost by the Arab states in 1967, the Russians must reckon with the likelihood that Nasser & Co. may go to war without asking for permission. This in fact is what the Israelis expect will happen some time within the next two or three years. It is not a prospect the Kremlin can view with enthusiasm, but having put their money on this particular horse, the Russians are to some extent the prisoners of their own folly.

The incalculable factor in this equation is the influence of Mao's China, and of Maoism among the crazier Arab terrorists. Not that China is likely to equip them with nuclear arms, but simply by keeping the pot on the boil Peking can embarrass Moscow to the point of provoking a new conflagration. Any settlement underwritten by the Big Four is certain to be denounced by the Maoists as a sell-out of the Palestine Arabs. Until the latter make their own arrangement with Israel—the best solution in the long run—competition among Moscow-trained Communists, ordinary Pan-Arabists of the Nasserite kind, Hitler-style "Arab socialists" of the Ba'ath variety, and Maoist gunmen committed to endless guerrilla warfare, can be relied upon to produce a fine witches' brew.

Apart from Turkey and Israel, there are no stable regimes in the area—although Iran is making economic progress and may yet produce a fairly effective military dictatorship, once the Shah has vacated the throne. But then one has recently seen in Pakistan that military rule tends to be short-lived. It is true that Iran is economically better off than Pakistan and does not have a population problem. Yet only liberals believe that economic growth automatically leads to political stability (is there any nonsense that liberals do *not* believe?). Communists know better: after all, Tsarist Russia around 1900 was making faster industrial progress than almost any other country in Europe, and this was just what kept the revolutionary ferment boiling. Anyway, no Leninist ever thought that economics determines politics. They know it is the other way around, at any rate in backward pre-industrial countries. As for Mao—but surely by now we have all studied the Little Red Book. And what is the message it conveys?

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Why, just what one might expect from a Rousseauist who fancies himself a Marxist: the Popular Will comes first, and once set in motion it is irresistible, moves mountains, makes water flow uphill, and in general conforms to ancient Chinese wisdom.

This of course is dangerous ground. Anyone who makes the obvious point that Mao has abandoned Marxism is in danger of being enlisted on the Russian side of this particular quarrel. In actual fact the Russians are being hoist with their own petard. What Mao has done is to take Leninism, strip it of its residual Marxist element, retain the populist content, and inflate it into a global creed suitable to the Third World of preindustrial countries. This indeed is heresy, but it is the sort that happens to suit China, just as "revisionism" is the kind that suits a Central European country like Czechoslovakia.

As for Soviet "orthodoxy," it is becoming indistinguishable from plain ordinary patriotism (not to mention the dread word imperialism). Academician Andrei Sakharov, the rising hope of the liberal science Establishment in the USSR, compares Mao with Hitler (see his recently published essay *Progress, Coexistence, and Intellectual Freedom*). Evgenyi Evtushenko says Mao reminds him of Genghis Khan (see his recent poem on the subject). Sakharov is a prominent physicist and an ardent Westernizer. Evtushenko is a sturdy patriot (and a bit of an opportunist). When two such different men are in agreement about the menace of Maoism, one may be reasonably certain that they reflect a fairly widespread sentiment. One may also suppose that the Kremlin, for all its idiotic brutality in dealing with the Czechoslovak reformers, does not seriously expect Russia to be invaded by the handful of NATO divisions stationed in Western Germany. Its real nightmare is an understanding between Washington and Peking. This may sound crazy, but Brezhnev & Co. are not noted for their sophisticated understanding of the outside world. Men capable of threatening an ally with bloody violence as a suitable reaction to a bit of popular rioting following an ice-hockey match, are clearly not fit to hold their posts. One recalls that after the June war in 1967 their representative at the United Nations compared Israel with the Third Reich. That is just about the intellectual and moral level to be expected from Stalin's heirs, not to mention their habit of reckless lying whenever driven into a corner. It accounts for their persistent failure to make sense of relatively simple matters, and for the growing skepticism their antics evoke even from their Warsaw Pact partners.

It also accounts for their inability to isolate China within the international Communist movement. On paper this ought to be easy, for Maoism really *is* a heresy when viewed from the Leninist angle. But by now—and especially since the invasion of Czechoslovakia last year—Moscow has lost its last shred of ideological credibility. When Russian spokesmen appeal to "proletarian internationalism" they sound about as convincing as a professional burglar preaching the sanctity of property. If their satellites go along with them, it is partly from habit, partly because they can see no advantage in switching to the Chinese side. Maoism holds no attraction for the industrial working class, on which in the last resort every genuine Communist party must rely. Its appeal is to those whom Fanon called the "wretched of the earth." In practice this means the starving peasantry of some backward countries, plus gunmen in search of an ideology that does not impose too much intellectual strain. It also appeals to racist sentiments in areas formerly colonized by Europeans, or presently garrisoned by bewildered American forces. Above all, needless to say, it appeals to Chinese national pride.

III

But does Mao have to be so furiously, almost pathologically, hostile to his erstwhile Russian mentors? Personal factors apart —after all, Maoism is as much the creation of one man as Leninism was—there is a certain unconscious logic about this kind of commitment. China really has nothing to lose, and quite a lot to gain, by casting itself in the role of leader of the Third World. The choice, however, entails a degree of intransigence which the Kremlin can no longer afford. It also responds to deep-seated national attitudes, and the Chinese revolution was a *national* one, whose leadership was captured by the Communists only after everyone else had failed. Movements of this kind derive their strength from a kind of patriotic frenzy that has to be generated to make Spartan austerity tolerable. In this sense the Russians are right when they assert that Mao has destroyed the Communist party and replaced it by a new organization based on the army, the students, and the peasantry: everyone except the industrial working class and the technical intelligentsia—the two strata that normally make up a Socialist, or Communist, party. Mao, for his part, seems to be guided by a sound instinct in pursuing a line that enables him to appeal to the Chinese *people*: an entity sufficiently vague to sanction whatever is declared to be necessary and beneficial for the greatness of China. This kind of stuff may sound archaic—it has in fact nothing whatever to do with Marxism, or even Leninism—but it is effective in mobilizing popular energies for the task of nation-building. It also appeals to the submerged masses in the Third World, and to those who consider themselves destined to lead them. There is nothing the Kremlin can do about it. Every orthodoxy gets the heresy it deserves, and this one looks like snowballing all over the place.

One thus comes back, in a roundabout fashion,

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to the triangular shape of great-power politics during the coming decade. For irrespective of Mao's intentions, or those of his colleagues and eventual successors, the long-run effect of Maoism can only be to turn China into a rival of both Russia and America: principally in Southeast Asia, but also further along the geographical and political axis running from East Pakistan (already in turmoil) via India toward the Middle East.

The term "Middle East," by the way, was invented in 1902 by Admiral Mahan to describe the area between Arabia and India. It was then taken up by the British and eventually came to replace the traditional expression "Near East" which really signified the crumbling Ottoman Empire and its more or less rebellious dependencies. By now everyone uses it—even the Middle Easterners themselves, though Professor Bernard Lewis has come across evidence that patriotic Indians tend to describe the region as "Western Asia"; but this cannot be to the taste of the Egyptians, so perhaps it is not really an improvement. Defining it as part of the Third World does not take one very far either, since that "world" includes Latin America if one applies sociological criteria. It seems more sensible to think of the area as the heartland of the Islamic culture, itself the inheritor of the ancient Oriental despotisms and their Hellenistic successors. Pan-Arabism has added to the confusion by substituting itself for Pan-Islamism, for while both Turks and Persians are Moslems, they have no use for the Arabs. It is thus quite wrong to imagine that one can substitute national for religious criteria in delimiting the region. For that matter, even where religion and nationality run in harness, as in West Pakistan, it does not follow that one will get either political stability or clear-cut party alignments corresponding to class interests.

The Russians have already discovered all this, much to their dismay. The Chinese, being even more ignorant and ethnocentric than the Russians, can be relied upon to make even worse mistakes. Their recent record in Indonesia—a culture area they might have been expected to understand—is enlightening in this respect. Indonesia provided a suitable environment for the application of Maoist tactics. The outcome is well known by now: armed violence, total failure, a gigantic massacre of something up to half-a-million Communist sympathizers down to the village level, and the complete wreckage of the Communist party itself. In view of this sobering experience, it is not surprising to learn that there are now three Communist parties in India, and probably as many in East Pakistan.

"Visions of a Red Bengalistan comprising India's West Bengal and Pakistan's eastern Bengali wing have begun to haunt some people in Delhi," one reads in the *New Statesman* (April 4). "Some Peking broadcasts" (the same correspondent goes on), "have also spoken of a Greater Bengal." No doubt. Meanwhile the orthodox, or Moscow-trained, Indian Communist leaders are busy working their way into the provincial governments, thereby challenging Delhi to intervene and establish military rule. If and when the Congress party finally disintegrates, this may actually happen. And the alternative? A united Communist Bengal, comprising both Hindus and Moslems, seems a lot less likely than an independent Moslem Bengal (the present "East Pakistan") on bad terms with both its Indian and Chinese neighbors. For to the masses religion still means more than nationality. Or rather, religion *is* their nationality, their way of defining themselves vis-à-vis the outside world. Territorial patriotism as the criterion of nationhood is a Western invention, no older than the American and French Revolutions. It has now gripped the intellectuals in a few Middle Eastern countries (chiefly in Turkey), and Maoism may acclimatize it in China. Elsewhere it is still regarded as a foreign importation.

THESE CONSIDERATIONS, oddly enough, supply the key—or at any rate one key—to the recent clashes along the Sino-Soviet frontier and the dark threats uttered by both sides. Having committed themselves to territorial patriotism, the Chinese cannot evade the logic of their choice. In 1964 Mao told a Japanese delegation (which promptly spread the news, thereby giving Moscow the jitters): "About a hundred years ago the area to the east of Lake Baikal became Russian territory. . . . Vladivostok, Khabarovsk, Kamchatka, and other areas, have become Soviet territory. We have not yet presented our account for this list" (the *Guardian*, London, March 4, 1969). In 1966 President Podgorny of the USSR, speaking appropriately in Khabarovsk, struck the patriotic note: "The soldiers of the Far Eastern military district . . . are faithfully guarding this dynamic region, created by the hands of our forefathers and covered by the sweat and blood of our people." Since then the verbal conflict has escalated to the level of veiled Soviet threats to drop nuclear bombs on China. On March 20 of this year the British and U.S. press reported Chinese-language broadcasts from Moscow in which any listening Chinese was informed that "the main weapons of the Soviet armed forces are their missiles with nuclear warheads of unlimited destructive power." For good measure an official Soviet note a few days earlier notified Peking that Russia was ready to administer a "crushing rebuff" to further Chinese incursions into Soviet territory. In the light of these utterances, the subsequent Soviet hysteria about "counterrevolutionary" assaults on the plate-glass window of the Aeroflot office in Prague by a few drunken Czechs celebrating the victory of their ice-hockey team, ceased to be comical and began

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to look alarming. Paranoia about encirclement is an ancient Muscovite trait. If the Russians are really losing their heads, we may be in for what the Chinese in olden days called "interesting times."

In this sort of conflict, traditional and modern instruments are employed simultaneously. Thus on April 4 Peking's diplomatic mission in London handed out a map which substituted Chinese names for Vladivostok and Khabarovsk, referred to the Amur river by its traditional Chinese appellation, and described large tracts of Soviet territory as "annexed." On the same day the newspapers reported a friendly message of greeting from the Rumanian party to the Communist party congress in Peking, earlier described by *Pravda* and *Kommunist* (the organ of the Soviet party's Central Committee) as a "Maoist farce." The Rumanians, needless to say, could not care less about the ownership of Khabarovsk. In their own fashion they were serving notice that the conference of Communist parties due to assemble in Moscow on June 5 was not going to pass off without trouble. What is more, they made their move three days after *Kommunist,* in a lengthy programmatic article, had solemnly denounced the "Mao Tse-tung group" for splitting the world Communist movement, opening a "second front" against the "socialist camp," planning to found a "Maoist international," preparing to install Chinese rockets in Albania, and seeking to prolong the Vietnamese war, while at the same time hindering the passage of Soviet equipment to Hanoi through Chinese territory. For good measure readers of *Kommunist* were warned that "Mao's group" would, "after the settlement of the Vietnamese affair," seek to extend its influence over other Southeast Asian territories and try to start up military conflicts in those regions "under diverse forms." From all of which it could be inferred that Moscow and Peking had declared total war on each other, in apparent disregard of the Leninist doctrine that Communism by its nature transcends nationalism. On the principles to which both sides are committed, this kind of conflict simply ought not to have occurred at all. But it has, and thus the entire Leninist heritage is now in danger of losing whatever credibility it ever possessed.

The American intervention in Vietnam inserted itself into this mounting tension between Russia and China, and for a while helped to dampen it down. After all, Peking could not relish the thought of 500,000 American soldiers almost on China's doorstep, not to mention the bombing of the North. The immediate reaction of both Moscow and Peking might have been foreseen: they began to compete for the allegiance of the North Vietnamese, thereby making a settlement more difficult. At the same time the implied threat to China started off a conflict between the Maoist faction, which was determined to break with Russia at all costs, and those military and civilian leaders who favored patching up relations with Moscow, in the hope of getting a supply of modern arms. In the end it was the Maoist line that triumphed, complete with rhetoric about a "people's war" should the Americans intervene in China. This was essentially a cautious position, albeit overlaid by revolutionary clamor. What it signified was that China would *not* adopt the kind of "forward policy" which might have become technically feasible in the context of an alliance with the USSR, as advocated by the defeated "orthodox," i.e., Stalinist, faction. It was the latter, not the Maoists, who envisaged an armed showdown with America over Vietnam —a showdown possible only with Russian help. Conversely, Mao's "people's war" strategy implied a strictly defensive attitude vis-à-vis the U.S. By now, with the departure of Mr. Rusk and his advisers, the State Department seems to have grasped this obvious conclusion. In retrospect one can also see that Mao launched the "cultural revolution"—that is, the destruction of the Communist party and the state bureaucracy—in 1966 only after he had begun to feel reasonably certain that the Americans would not in fact invade China. He may have received some confidential assurances to that effect. If so, this would represent one of the few occasions in recent years when American diplomacy has brought off a genuine *coup.*

With the risk of a major war removed (presumably in exchange for a tacit Chinese promise not to intervene massively in Vietnam so long as the United States did not escalate its bombing beyond a certain level), Mao could turn his attention to the "cultural revolution." He could also press his claims against the USSR. Both decisions followed from the same underlying assumption: that neither a global revolution nor an armed conflict with America was in prospect for the near future. In principle, China's national interest is still identified with "world revolution" in the Maoist sense: a confrontation between the "imperialist West" and the "Third World." But at some stage after 1966 a decision seems to have been taken in Peking to the effect that all this could wait for a while. What mattered more urgently was to refashion the party and the country in the spirit of Maoism. The underlying assumptions have not changed, only the priorities have. That at least is how it looks to those British Sinologists who read the signs to mean that Maoism is now fully integrated with traditional Chinese nationalism. From this standpoint, China's claim to Formosa must seem far more important to Mao and his heirs than a successful revolution in Cuba, not to mention an unsuccessful one in Bolivia. It is all very natural and traditional. It is also very inconvenient for the Russians, since it opens up the perspective

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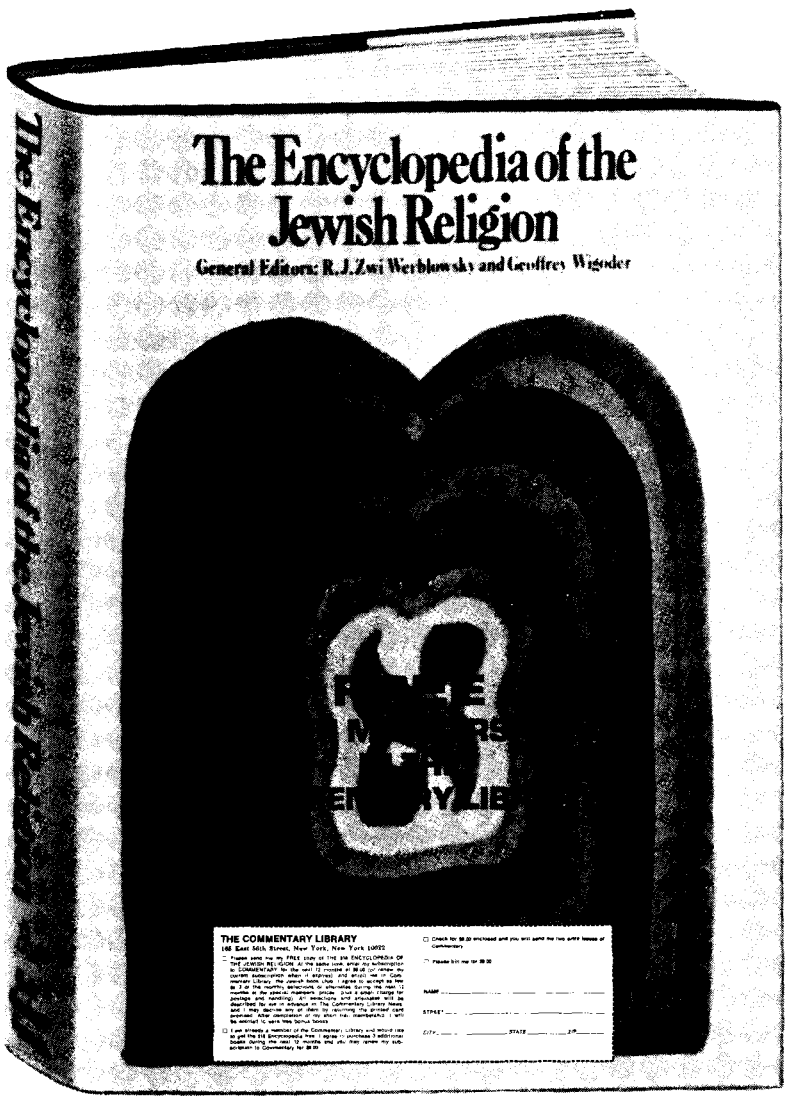
of "peaceful coexistence" between America and China. The now thoroughly defeated Stalinist faction in Peking, which placed the Sino-Soviet alliance above all other considerations, represented a guarantee that China would not succumb to "chauvinism": or rather, that it would reserve whatever chauvinistic instincts it possessed for the struggle against the West.

This guarantee has now vanished, and Maoism has become the vehicle of nationalist sentiments directed impartially against China's neighbors—the USSR above all. When Mao is gone and the new China comes out of its self-imposed isolation, it will doubtless do its best to look and sound like a fire-breathing dragon, but no one is going to be able to predict with any certainty in which direction the dragon will breathe fire. One understands the rage that fills the minds of Stalin's heirs in Moscow: after all those years spent extolling the solidarity of the Communist world against the imperialist West, are they to be thanked by having a hostile China on their doorstep? The answer, it appears, is "yes." Some of them may be wondering whether there was ever any sense in helping the Chinese Communists to win power (though in point of fact Stalin never trusted them and even tried to sabotage their victory in 1949). But what was the alternative? A China run by the semi-fascist Kuomintang, firmly allied to the United States, would have been even worse from the Soviet standpoint. In this wretched world even the most farseeing statesmen rarely get what they want, as the editors of *Kommunist* would know if they had taken the trouble to read Marx, not to mention Hegel. The actual outcome usually tends to be quite different from what anyone had planned, and may even be the exact reverse thereof. Stalin's favorite author toward the end of his career (one is told) was Machiavelli. He could not have made a more unfortunate choice, or one less likely to benefit his successors.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New Israeli Fiction

Robert Alter

One should present the great and simple things, like desire and death.
AMOS OZ

SOMETHING NEW has clearly been happening in Israeli fiction. Literary generations of course never really correspond to those symmetric schemes in which writers are seen marching past the review-stand of criticism in neat rows two decades apart; but now that twenty years have elapsed since the emergence of the first generation of native Israeli writers, one becomes increasingly aware of new Hebrew writers who have grown up with the accomplished fact of Jewish sovereignty in a state of seige, and whose attitudes toward language and literary tradition, as well as toward the social realities around them, are often strikingly different from those of their predecessors.

The writers who first came to prominence in the later 40's are generally referred to in Hebrew criticism as the Generation of '48, sometimes even as the Palmach Generation, and there is a certain justice in the fact that their literary effort should be linked in this way with a historical event and a national—necessarily, military—institution. Historical trauma was a first fact of manhood for many of them; public events had irrupted into their lives with all the imperiousness, the ugly violence, and the moral ambiguity that such events can assume in a time of war, against a background of ideological stridencies. The act of writing fiction, then, was frequently the direct critical response of a troubled individual consciousness to the political and social realities that impinged upon it, pained it, threatened its integrity. Consequently, the most common mode of Hebrew fiction throughout the 50's and early 60's was social realism, usually of a drably conventional sort, however strong the moral impulse behind it. Such writing was often primarily an examination of the problematics of self-definition through a repeated sifting of the various social, political, and ideological materials that were the particular circumstances of the Israeli self at a fixed point in time. Thus, the nature of the kibbutz, the army, the youth movement, the new urban milieus, was sometimes almost as much the "subject" of this fiction as the lives of the characters, or, at any rate, individual lives were conceived in terms of their entanglement in these social spheres, and the social setting in turn was implicated in the destiny of the nation.

Such characterizations of whole generations, to be sure, easily lapse into caricature, and in fact one can find a few exceptions to my generalization among books written by members of the Generation of '48, but the broad orientation of the group toward social realism seems to me undeniable. On the other hand, there were a few writers old enough to have fought in the War of Independence whose cultural background, personal experience, or sensibility set them quite apart from this group; who have been attracted to symbolic, parabolic, or expressionist modes of fiction; and whose writing looks beyond the historical situation to trans-historical questions about human nature, value, existence itself.

Perhaps the earliest and most peculiar Israeli book of this sort is Pinhas Sadeh's *Life as a Parable* (1958), the autobiographical record of a Rimbaud-like spiritual quest beyond the limits of conventional morality. One might also mention Yehuda Amichai's first volume of experimental stories, *In This Terrible Wind* (1961), his remarkable symbolic novel, *Not of This Time, Not of This Place** (1963), and Yoram Kaniuk's Agnonesque first novel, *The Acrophile* (1961). Kaniuk's recent second novel, *Himmo, King of Jerusalem*† (1966), is an especially clear illustration of the distance between this middle group of writers and the Generation of '48 because, like many of the earlier Israeli novels, it is set in the War of Independence, but with a startlingly different perspective. (It might be noted that both Kaniuk and Sadeh are in their late thirties, while the typical Palmach Generation writers are now in their late forties or early fifties.) The substantive action of the Kaniuk novel—the eery, ambiguous love of an Israeli army nurse for a hideously mutilated casualty—could have taken place in any war, at any time. The novel is actually a kind of clinical investigation into the extreme limits of human love, into the moral ambiguities underlying our ultimate categories of life and death.

* Recently issued in English translation by Harper & Row, 344 pp., $6.95.

† English translation published this year by Atheneum, 246 pp., $5.75.

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Pinhas Sadeh's second prose work—he published poetry earlier—provides an even more dramatic antithesis to the fiction of the Generation of '48. The first volume of a projected longer novel, it is called, apparently without either irony or allusion to Malraux, *On the Human Condition* (1967). Deploying its characters in a recognizable Jerusalem setting, often with persuasive fidelity to details of milieu, the novel and its protagonists conjure with such terms as the image of God and the image of man, divine jest and cosmic dread, infinity and finiteness, loneliness, lust, the hunger for beauty, and their dialectic interrelation. Sadeh's radically antinomian religious vision—both Sabbatai Zevi and Joseph Frank are invoked in the argument of his novel—is admittedly rather special, perhaps finally private, but his explicit insistence on using the medium of fiction as a means of confronting nothing less than "the human condition" is shared by the two most original and highly regarded of the new Israeli writers, Amos Oz (who is just twenty-nine) and Avraham B. Yehoshua (who is now thirty-two). Like Sadeh, like Amichai and Kaniuk, both Oz and Yehoshua are capable of precise observation of Israeli actualities, but their real interests, too, lie far beyond or below the particular structures of Israeli society.

At first thought, it may seem a little odd that Hebrew writers should permit themselves the "luxury" of contemplating man as a moral, spiritual, or even metaphysical entity rather than as a social-political agent at the very moment when the vise of historical necessity has gripped Israel's national existence more tightly than ever before. On reflection, though, one can see a kind of logic in this whole shift of perspective. For Israelis who have grown up with the State, harsh historical necessity has lost the upsetting impact of traumatic surprise. Statehood and armed confrontation with the Arabs are basic facts of existence, no longer new crises that throw into question the whole moral and political vocabulary with which one has been raised.

There is even a sense, I would argue, in which Israel's continuing existence as a sophisticated technological society and parliamentary democracy in a state of siege becomes a sharply focused image of the general conditions of life in the second half of the 20th century. Israelis live with a full sense—at times even a buoyant sense—of realized "normalcy," committing their constructive energies to the ongoing development of a civilized order of existence, while the contradictory awareness of the menace of the abyss on the other side of the border has itself become a part of normalcy. The insistent presence of the Palestinian landscape, moreover, with its startling topographical contrasts and its complex web of historical associations, amplifies and complicates this sense of looming oppositions in the Israeli situation.

For Amos Oz, and in a more restricted way for A. B. Yehoshua, there is something uncannily semantic about Israeli reality. Topographical, architectural, even institutional actualities allude to things beyond themselves, and though both writers have been guilty on occasion of symbolic contrivance (Oz much more glaringly), one gets some sense that their cultural predicament has made symbolists out of them. One of Yehoshua's narrators in fact comments on the temptations of symbolism which the setting offers: "For everyone here is addicted to symbols. With all their passion for symbolism the Jerusalemites imagine that they themselves are symbols. As a result they speak in symbolic fashion with a symbolic language, they walk symbolically and meet each other in symbolic style. Sometimes, when they lose their grip a little, they imagine that the sun, the wind, the sky above their city, are all merely symbols that need looking into." There is, patently, an acerbic ironic perspective here on the excesses of symbol-hunting and symbol-making; the ironic intelligence points to the admirable artistic restraint with which Yehoshua, in his second volume of fiction, *Opposite the Forests* (1968), develops a distinctive mode of symbolism that is quietly suggestive and for the most part not obtrusive.

Perhaps the best way to see what Yehoshua and Oz do with their local surroundings is to observe an instance of their treatment of Jerusalem. For Jerusalem, as the passage quoted from Yehoshua suggests, is the most portentously "symbolic" of Israeli realities, its streets and skyline and natural setting a crazy-quilt pattern of all the profound antinomies of Israeli life—modernity and antiquity intermingled; brisk Western energies amid the slow, patient rhythms of the Orient; incessant building on a landscape that remains fiercely unbuilt, or somehow in ruins; the seat of Jewish sovereignty hard against the presence of the Arab antagonist. Here is Yehoshua, in as long a descriptive passage as the taut surface of his writing will permit: "Apartment buildings all around, bared rocks, crimson soil. Half city, half ruin. Jerusalem in her sadness, her unending destruction. No matter how much they build, there will always be within her a remembrance of the destruction." And here is Oz, with somewhat untypical conciseness, reflecting on the same setting in a novel where the presence of the city dominates the action: "On winter nights the buildings of Jerusalem seem like mirages of coagulated gray on a black screen. A landscape of suppressed violence. Jerusalem knows how to be an abstract city: stones, pine trees, and rusting iron." Or, later on in the same novel, when political boundaries—they are those of the period before June 1967—give a special resonance to the symbolism of the landscape: "Through the defiles of the streets in Jerusalem at dusk one can see the

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mountains growing in obscurity as though waiting for the darkness in order to fall on the drawn-in city."

The opposition between Yehoshua and Oz is roughly that between daytime and night world. Though Yehoshua's first volume of stories, *The Death of the Old Man* (1962), draws frequently on fantasy, with signs of influence from both Kafka and Agnon, his world is characteristically one of bright Mediterranean daylight, and it is instructive that the principal action in three of the four novellas grouped together in *Opposite the Forests* takes place during a *khamsin*, when the pitiless summer sunlight gives an astringent definition to surfaces, contours, colors, people. The swift staccato phrases quoted on the paradox of Jerusalem occur in the first-person narration of an aging, long-silent poet who has just come to leave his retarded son as an apprentice with a Jerusalem bookbinder. The city quite naturally becomes a voice in the frustrated poet's disheartened meditations on the futility of all creative activity, the ambiguity of speech, the eternal dead ground of silence from which language arises and in which it is absorbed again. The harsh peculiarities of the local landscape are a means of giving shape and solidity to the harsh contradictions of being a man, a speaking creature in a universe that cares nothing for speech.

Oz's vision of Jerusalem is also seen through the eyes of a first-person narrator, in this case a young married woman obsessed with death, the passage of time, the threat of violence, and dreams of sexual debasement. The perspective he tries to establish, however, for all his fiction is ultimately not clinical but mythic: Jerusalem the city surrounded by ancient mountains and enemy forces, as it is mediated through the consciousness of his protagonist, becomes the flimsy structure of human civilization perched on the lid of a volcano of chthonic powers, and so the "true" city emerges in the developing solution of darkness as a coagulated mirage, while the sinister darkling mountains all around prepare to pounce, to destroy.

THE WORK of both Oz and Yehoshua raises an interesting question about Israel's peculiar cultural situation. Their concerns, as I have already intimated, are if not quite apolitical then metapolitical, seeking to come to grips with the ultimate facts about human nature and social existence which issue in political events, institutions, and conflicts. But given the explosively charged nature of Israel's political situation, it is not surprising that a good many readers should see directly political, even "subversive," implications in this new kind of Hebrew fiction. Oz's books and the response they have elicited are especially instructive in this connection because his imagination has been powerfully attracted to visions of Dionysiac release which he has repeatedly translated into local social situations and political terms.

The plot of his first novel, *Somewhere Else* (1966) is a writhing tangle of adulterous and quasi-incestuous relationships in a kibbutz near the Syrian border. (Oz himself has been a member of Kibbutz Hulda near the old Jordanian border since 1957.) Some reviewers, reading Oz's novel as though it were one of the novels of kibbutz life of the preceding generation, denounced him for sensationalistic distortion, even accused him of attempting to discredit Israel's noblest social experiment. The real function, however, of the kibbutz for Oz is as a focused, dramatically tractable image of the fragile and precarious nature of all civilized order. His fictitious kibbutz sits under the shadow of enemy guns, with the murky realm beyond the border almost a kabbalistic Other Side, or, to use the animal imagery in which Oz delights, a howling, primeval "jackal country"—the title of his first book, a collection of short stories issued in 1965—that both entices and disturbs those who dwell within the tight geometric boundaries of the kibbutz.

The collective settlement, then, is more a convenient microcosm than the "representation" of an actual institution: a small, rationally ordered society, explicitly idealistic in its purposes, where roles and relations are sharply defined, and where forced proximity can serve as a social pressure-cooker for petty jealousies and instinctual urges, the kibbutz becomes in Oz a kind of schematic recapitulation of civilization, its self-delusions and discontents. The Israeli critic Gershon Shaked has stated this same point succintly in a cogent argument against the conception of Oz as a tendentious social realist: "His kibbutzim are human islands in a 'jackal country' that breaks into the islands and destroys them from within." This process of the symbolic transmutation of the political may become clearer through example. Here is a description of night on the kibbutz, in fact part of a short chapter devoted solely to such description, which occurs about half-way through *Somewhere Else*:

> Now the crickets. The crickets exchange secret signals. The distant motor of the freezer-shed slips in among their voices. The swish of the sprinklers tricks you and falls into the camp of the crickets. The crickets are discovering your hidden places, giving away your fear in sound-signals to their friends who listen to them from the enemy fields.
>
> And what is in the howling of the dogs? There is a dark nightmare in the howling of the dogs. One must not trust the dogs. The howling of the dogs goes whoring after the mountains.
>
> The mountains are unseen but their presence weighs on the valley. The mountains are there. Wanton gulleys descend and charge against this place. Somber masses of rock hang by a thread on the heights. Their connection with the mountain range is suspect. A kind of muted

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stirring, a restrained patient murmur, glides down from somewhere beyond. The mountains are there. In absolute stillness they are there. In a position of twisted pillars they are there, as though an act of burning lust had taken place among the eternal elements and in the very moment of heat it had petrified and hardened.

This remarkable piece of disquieting prose catches up most of the important elements of Oz's distinctive world. One notes a strange interplay between descriptive specification and looming vagueness, between massive solidity and wraith-like elusive substance and sound. The stately, repetitive, almost incantatory movement of the prose points toward the revelation of some dimly impending cataclysm, prefigured here in the violent image of the last sentence. Oz is a poet of fluid and disruptive energies, and for him the solidity of the "real" world—whether natural scene or man-made object and order or human nature—is illusory, merely the temporary hardening of volcanic lava that seeks to become molten again, or, as in his vision of Jerusalem, merely a mirage of "coagulated gray on a black screen." Significantly, the violent forces locked up in nature are linked with wild sexuality: the gulleys storming down on the kibbutz are "wanton," the contorted forms of rock are testimony to a primordial past of vast orgiastic dimensions. Correspondingly, in the action of the novels and short stories, it is chiefly through his sexuality that man answers the call of the darkness "out there." The howling dogs of this passage are a dramatic model of the human response to the darkness within. In proper biblical language, their cry "goes whoring after the mountains," for one assumes it is an answer to the howl of their untamed cousins, the jackals, out beyond the pale, where human restraint and discipline are unknown, where every instinct to raven and destroy, to sate all appetites, is, quite literally, unleashed.

The scene, of course, has a direct relation to recognizable political realities. The mountains are forbidding not only because of their ontological otherness from man but because they are in Syrian territory, and they hide an armed human enemy waiting for the chance to attack the kibbutz. What should be noted, however, is the way in which the Arab military adversary has been completely assimilated into the mythic landscape, interfused with it. As a matter of fact, actual Arab antagonists do not appear in this passage at all (though they do frequently elsewhere in Oz), but nature here has itself become the invading threat—the spy network of crickets, the treacherous dogs howling up to the mountains—and the Arabs when they are imagined directly are merely extensions, embodiments, of an inimical yet seductive nature. Oz's imaginative rendering of the state of siege, in terms of its origins in his private world of neurosis, is an Israeli's nightmare of life in a garrison-state, but as a component of a realized artistic whole, it has very little to do with the actual conditions of the state of siege, whether political, moral, or even psychological.

All this needs to be clearly stated in order to see in proper perspective Oz's most recent book, his most fully realized achievement to date, *My Michael* (1968). The novel, which has been a spectacular best-seller in Israel this year—over 30,000 copies sold in a country where the Hebrew-reading public can scarcely number a million—has enjoyed the peculiar fate of being at once a *succès de scandale* and a *succès d'estime*. The critical esteem seems to me warranted because *My Michael* is an arresting novel in itself and represents an impressive advance in artistic control over its author's two earlier books. For Oz's brooding lyric prose, as one might infer even from the passage just quoted, is often in danger of breaking out into purple patches; and his intense desire to connect characters with elemental forces sometimes leads him into blatant melodrama or painfully contrived symbolism. (Some of the early fiction makes one think of the most sophomoric things in D. H. Lawrence, like "Nomads and Viper," the story of a kibbutz girl who, repelled, frightened, and attracted by a dusky, potent bedouin, imagines she has been touched by him and is racked with physical revulsion, then is bitten by an all-too-phallic snake and dies in sweet waves of ecstasy.) In his latest book, Oz demonstrates a new sureness of touch in arranging a suggestive dialectic between fantasy and outer reality through the language of his first-person narrator.

HANNAH GONEN, the protagonist, the wife of a graduate student in geology at the Hebrew University, is, as at least two reviewers have observed, a Madame Bovary of the interior world. Trapped in the flat bourgeois existence of a Jerusalem *hausfrau*, her isolation ironically reinforced by the good-natured devotion of her systematic, practical-minded, "achievement-oriented," hopelessly unimaginative husband, she escapes into an inner realm of fantasy, compounded of early memories, juvenile literature, and suppressed desires, where she can reign as a splendid queen and abandon herself to lovers who exist solely in a subterranean sphere of the imagination. What Oz has done in this novel is to find a fully-justified location within character for that chthonic world to which his own imagination is drawn. As Hannah Gonen's narrative shuttles between outer and inner worlds, the quality of the prose itself oscillates—on the one hand, a parade of brief, factual, elliptic sentences whose flat rhythms and direct unqualified statements precisely define the deadness of the external world for Hannah; on the other hand, in her interior monologues, a haunting florescence of language, highly colored with emo-

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tive adjectives and vivid sensory imagery, run-on sentences spilling from fantasy to fantasy through underground caverns out of Jules Verne. It is precisely because Michael, her husband, has no access to this private world, is incapable even of imagining its existence, that conjugal sex itself is finally adulterous for Hannah. She clings to her husband's body in fear and desperation, as Emma Bovary grasped at Rodolphe and Leon, but he cannot release her from the prison of her isolation even when he gives her ecstasy. Thus, after a pyrotechnic description of the heights and depths of orgasm with Michael, Hannah tells us, "And yet I evaded him. I related only to his body: muscles, arms, hair. In my heart I knew that I was betraying him, over and over. With his body."

Hannah's maddening desire to break loose from the trap of her own existence is, like the dark urges of the characters in Oz's previous novel, a response to the basic condition of civilization, but it is presented in a familiar social context, and this is what has given the book a certain degree of notoriety in Israel. For the Israeli, Jerusalem is the political center, the key historical symbol, and, since June 1967, the chief non-negotiable fact, of national existence. (One notes that the draft of the novel was completed just weeks before the war broke out.) In *My Michael*, however, Jerusalem, the illusory, unknowable city of congealed nightmare and suppressed violence, is the principal symbol for the protagonist's state of alienation. The single moment in the novel when she can pronounce the words, "I belonged," is during a visit to a kibbutz in the Galilee, where "Jerusalem was far away and could no longer pursue." But a glimpse of Arab shepherds on an opposite slope is enough to remind her of her lack of connection with the world around her, and at once a vision of the somber, forbidding Jerusalem of her fears rises before her again.

Oz thus puts the materials of the Israeli scene to darkly suggestive use in a mythic drama, but it is clear why some readers should feel at least uneasy with what he has done. Such uneasiness becomes acute in the response to his treatment of Arab terrorism in *My Michael*. Hannah Gonen remembers a pair of Arab twins, Halil and Aziz, with whom she used to play as a child in Jerusalem during the period before 1948. Halil and Aziz return now in her fantasies to break into her house and violate her, and it is evident that she is far more fascinated than frightened by them. She imagines them as having become terrorists, and it is in this guise that they appear in the climactic fantasy of destruction which concludes the novel, and which more than one reviewer quoted in outrage: Hannah sees Halil and Aziz gliding across the Judean Desert toward their objective within Israel, daggers in hand, sub-machine guns and explosive devices on their backs, so thoroughly part of the natural setting that their movements are pure feline grace and fluidity, and, like the crickets in *Somewhere Else*, their communication an exchange of guttural "sound signals," not human language. The alluring alien twins are in some way an uncanny and piquant doubling of the male principle for Hannah; she imagines both their animal grace and their capacity for violence in erotic terms: "Theirs is a language of simple symbols—gentle touches, a muted murmur, like a man and woman who are lovers. A finger on the shoulder. A hand on the nape. Birdcall. Secret whistle. High thorns in the gulley. The shadow of old olive trees. Silently the earth gives herself." Thus there is an almost exhilarating feeling of release in the explosion that culminates this fantasy, and the chill silence that afterward descends on the land, in the final sentence of the novel, brings with it a curious sense of relief for the protagonist.

Now, it is obvious that this dream of terrorists flowing across the desert in perfect catlike motion "that is a caress full of yearning" corresponds faithfully only to Hannah Gonen's fantasy world, not to the actual motley collection of unstable, deluded, and generally inept types that have tried to carry out the fundamentally ineffectual program of Al Fatah. As some of the response to the novel indicates, Oz is playing with explosive material in more than one sense by pulling these political actualities into the warp of a mythic confrontation. What should be noted is the peculiar double edge of his whole literary enterprise. In one sense, it can legitimately be conceived as a document, and a very troubling one, of Israel's state of seige; but at the same time, paradoxically, it bears witness to the complete freedom of consciousness of the Israeli writer, who does not feel compelled to treat the conflict with the Arabs in a context of political "responsibility" but may reshape it into an image of human existence quite beyond politics.

Avraham B. Yehoshua writes a much cooler, more understated kind of fiction than Oz, sometimes arranging his narrative materials in generalizing designs that place them almost at the distance of parable from the reader; but there are certain affinities in theme between the two writers. Several of Yehoshua's protagonists, like those of Oz, bear within them a deep sexual wound that humiliates them, drives them to acts of hostility. Without a trace of Oz's mythopoeic imagination or his interest in an erotic underworld, Yehoshua also often sees lurking animal instincts beneath the façade of the civilized self; his educated, ostensibly pacific, ineffectual personages frequently harbor a murderous impulse to destroy whatever stands in their way or whatever is associated with those who have given them pain. "Three Days and a Little Boy," the last story in *Opposite the Forests*, is the ac-

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count of a bachelor who agrees to take care of his former mistress's son and then struggles—in quiet ambivalence, never melodramatically—with the desire to do away with the child as an act of vengeance against its mother, who has dared to prefer another man.

Peculiarly, but most appropriately, this tersely-reported first-person narrative proves to be a kind of submerged animal fable. If we translate the rather common Hebrew names of the protagonists—all of them are graduate students at the Hebrew University and none is overtly "animalistic"—we find that Wolf the father brings his small son (whose garbled name remains a puzzle) to Bear, his wife's former lover. Bear has a new mistress, Gazelle, a naturalist devoted to the collection of thorns, and he shares with her an odd friend, a gentle, slightly daft herpetologist named Hart, who gets bitten by one of his snakes during the course of events because he refuses to crush it when it slithers away. Near the end of the novella, Bear tells the child a story about a bear, a fox, a wolf, a hart, and their wives who go off to the forest where they carry on "cruel wars." The boy is especially moved by the little wolves that are drowned in the river; and at the end of the tale, when the teller decides to destroy every living creature, leaving only one little wolf-cub, we infer that an ambiguous reconciliation has been effected between the man and the child he thought of killing: Bear (is he also the ravening fox of his tale?) identifies with his rival's son, the wolfling, out of self-pity, and so allows him to live, in story and in fact. The scheme of the animal fable here may suggest how Yehoshua deftly defines an intricate constellation of ambiguous motives and relations with great economy of means.

Also like Oz is Yehoshua's fascination with destruction for its own sake, the desires civilization breeds in people to escape its imposed order and rational framework. Yehoshua treated one variant of this condition in an early story, "The Tropville Evening Express," about a quiet little town that is pitifully *de trop* in a world of vast wars and so its citizens conspire to cause a trainwreck simply to make something happen in the dead air of their empty existence. More memorably, this time using materials from Israel's political situation, Yehoshua deals with the same problem in the title story of *Opposite the Forests*. A quick summary will reveal the direct thematic connection with Oz. The protagonist, a badly-blocked graduate student in history, has taken a job as a fire watchman at a JNF forest so that he can have the uninterrupted solitude to write an essay on the Crusades. (In order to see the full point of the story, one must keep in mind the comparison between Israelis and Crusaders frequently drawn in Arab propaganda.) The man-made forest has grown up over the site of an Arab village that was razed in the fighting of '48. One of the villagers, however, an old mute, remains as caretaker of the ranger's station together with an enigmatic little girl who seems to look after him. At first the new ranger strains every nerve watching day and night for a sign of fire in order to call in the alarm, but imperceptibly it becomes clear to him and to us that he really wants the fire to break out, and when the Arab mute finally puts the forest to the torch, the watchman is a passive accomplice, exhilarated by the all-consuming flame and by the vision of the long-destroyed village he sees rising in the tongues of smoke and fire.

The political application of the story is transparent, and for anyone accustomed to thinking of Israel in official Zionist terms, it may seem more comprehensively "subversive" than anything in Oz. Yehoshua, let me emphasize, is unswervingly committed to Israel's survival and to the constructive development of Israeli society—he is, of all things, Dean of Students at Haifa University—and the story must properly be seen as an unflinching exploration of the shadowy underside of ambivalence in Israeli consciousness within the state of siege. A more general human ambivalence is also implied in the story's use of the local situation; as we move in a typical Yehoshua pattern from the frustrations of impotence—here, the unwritten paper—to the thirst for destruction, we get a sense of the balked consciousness of civilized man secretly longing for the cataclysm that will raze all the artificial hedging structures of human culture. The steadily generalizing perspective of all Yehoshua's fiction is clear from the opening sentences of "Opposite the Forests":

> The last winter, too, was lost in fog. As usual he did nothing. He put off his exams, and the papers, of course, remained unwritten. Yes, he had long since finished hearing everything, that is, all his lectures. A chain of signatures in his dog-eared registration book certified that everyone had fulfilled his obligation toward him and had disappeared in silence, and now the obligation was left in his hands alone, his slack hands. But words make him tired; even his own words, and certainly the words of others. In the world around him he drifts from one apartment to another, without roots or a steady job.

The unnamed graduate student at once becomes an exemplar of contemporary futility, purposelessness, deracination, but with none of the self-conscious reaching for the effects of a Kafka parable that one finds in some of Yehoshua's earlier stories. The language is unpretentious, the diction largely colloquial, the references to the details of student life factually precise yet formulated to make their paradigmatic implications evident. The first sentences of the story introduce us immediately to the characteristic Yehoshua world, which is, in a word, a world of incomple-

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tions. Characters undertake all kinds of projects which they are incapable of seeing to an end—a thesis, a poem, a love affair, the building of a dam in Africa. As this protagonist's fatigue with language suggests, the individual is confirmed in his radical loneliness because the instruments of communication seem so pathetically inadequate, or futile. "Is it still possible to say anything?" asks another Yehoshua protagonist at the end of his disillusioning experiences. Most of Yehoshua's stories are models of the difficulties of communication; as we have seen, he delights in juxtaposing mutually incomprehensible figures—an Israeli student and an old Arab mute, a poet father and a retarded son, a bachelor and a three-year-old, and, in the fourth story of this volume, an Israeli engineer and a hostile, mocking African doctor. In each of these cases, communication of sorts does take place, but it is generally an ambiguous, troubling communication, sometimes with ominous results, destruction becoming the final language. I alluded earlier to Yehoshua's ironic intelligence; one is especially aware of its presence in the wryly comic effects of poignant farce through which he frequently conveys the breakdown of communication, the failure of human relation. An ultimate act of derisively inadequate communication is the visit paid to the fire-watcher in his lonely station by a former mistress, the wife of a friend:

> Only toward sunset does he succeed in stripping her. The binoculars are still hanging on his chest, squeezed between them. From time to time he coolly interrupts his kisses and embraces, lifts his binoculars to his eyes, and peers into the forest.
>
> "Duty," he whispers in apology, with a strange smile, to the naked, embarrassed woman. Everything intermingles in the illumination of the far-off, reddish sun. The blue of the sea in the distance, the silent trees, the drops of blood on his bruised lips, the despair, the insipidness, the loneliness of naked flesh. Unintentionally her hand touches his bared skull, and recoils.

Such a bleak view of humanity as this would be utterly depressing were it not articulated with a quality of imaginative wit, as a critique of mankind's inadequacies, a sort of ultimate satire, that is finally moral in purpose. If, as I have suggested, there is some relationship to Kafka in the earlier Yehoshua, he stands at about the same distance from the German writer as Isaac Rosenfeld. Like Rosenfeld, he offers us in place of Kafka's neurotic visionary intensity a critical shrewdness in the manipulation of narrative, a certain muted intellectual verve, an ironic perspective in which sympathy for the characters and their predicaments is continuous with rigorous judgment of them. Because of this effect of broad critical overview in his fiction, Yehoshua is able at times to project with the greatest naturalness a general image of human existence out of the particular tensions, strains, fears, and ambiguities of life in an Israel surrounded by enemies. The suggestive connection between particular and universal is especially clear in a story called "The Last Commander," which is included in *The Death of the Old Man*. This is how the story begins:

> Since the end of the war we have been sitting in gloomy offices, gripping pencils and sending each other chilly notes on matters we regard as important. Had we lost, we would now be cursed. Called to account for murder, for theft, for our dead comrades. Having won, we brought redemption, but they must keep us busy with something; if not, who would get down from the swift, murderous jeeps, piled high with their machine guns and bands of bullets.

At once we are presented with a world that is based on Israeli reality but not a direct representation of it. Reflections and refractions of particular facts of Israeli existence glimmer through the story: the veterans are called on annual reserve duty to maneuvers in a blistering desert where two or three of the enemy, "wrapped in black," are occasionally glimpsed disappearing into the distant hills; a staff officer descends in a helicopter from the pitiless desert sky to supervise the reservists; even the transition indicated in the opening sentence from military service to bureaucracy is an especially characteristic fact of Israeli life. However, only one place name, presumably Arab, is given in the entire story, the few names of characters offered have no clear national identity, and the war that has been fought is not specifically the war of 1948-49 but an archetypal "seven year's war" with an anonymous enemy who remains completely faceless.

The story finally is not "about" Israel's security situation but about human effort, will, and the strain of maintaining the disciplines of civilization in an utterly indifferent cosmos. The veterans are deposited in a completely isolated desert campsite where they find themselves under the command of an enigmatic officer named Yagnon who promptly sprawls out on the ground and goes to sleep, very quickly inducing his men to follow his example. Long undifferentiated days of languid stupor under the hot desert sun are finally interrupted by the airborne arrival of the company commander, who at once begins to put the men through their paces—setting up tents, building latrines, erecting a flagpole, charging, crawling, scrambling in full battle gear across the sun-baked terrain hour after hour in mock pursuit of an imaginary enemy, even forced to bellow out old battle songs around the campfire at night. Six days the commander works the men, and on the seventh day he allows them to rest while briefing them on a week-long forced march across the desert that he has devised for them. But on the morning of the eighth day the heli-

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copter descends out of the empty sky to take the commander back to the base, and in a single impulse, the men wreck the latrines, overturn the tents, pull down the flagpole, throw off their battle gear, and fling themselves onto the ground, to return to their previous state of numbed somnolence. "Seven days he was with us," the narrator comments, "and every day he engraved with white-hot iron. He wanted to make order, and what he brought was fear."

If one tried to restrict the story to a purely political frame of reference, it would emerge as a parable of encounter with a fascist ethos. The writer, however, offers a number of important indications that the meaning of the events demands a broader and more complex perspective. We are made significantly aware of the presence of the elemental desert over against the sky, described at the very end as "the stretches of whitish glare called the heavens"; we note equally the descent of the commander out of the fierce blue like an implacable god, and the six days of creation through which the soldiers labor on their exhausting and futile tasks. The story might usefully be viewed as an ironic inversion of the great desert myth of modern Hebrew literature, Bialik's *Desert Dead*. In the Bialik poem, the titanic figures who sought to rebel against the Lord of Hosts lie struck to stone, massive granite forms cast by the divine wrath out of the stream of time. In "The Last Commander," rebellion expresses itself not as in Bialik by an assertion of clenched will but in a slackening, a lapse into lassitude. The bodies stretched out on the desert sands represent an ironic victory over the divine imperative in having escaped from the agonizing and abrasive effort of life in history—the seven days of creation—to an unending anti-sabbath of leaden slumber. The story maintains a fine balance of perspective to the end; the narrator makes us feel the voluptuous attraction of sleep, and more sleep, for the exhausted men, but we are also led to see that this orgy of inanition signifies moral and physical paralysis, is finally a sour parody of death.

Both Yehoshua and Oz, then, achieve the widest reverberations of meaning not when they attempt self-consciously to be universal but precisely when they use their fiction as an instrument to probe the most troubling implications of their own cultural and political reality. One is tempted to see them as a kind of Faulkner-Hemingway polarity of talents, Oz having the greater range—in resources of style, in realization of character, in sheer mimetic ability—and Yehoshua a greater degree of poise, efficiency, artistic cunning. Either of them, I believe, would be an exciting writer at this point in time in any national literature. Their appearance now on the Hebrew literary scene bears witness to the ability of Israeli society to maintain under the shadow of the sword a complex culture that is both a medium of self-knowledge and an authentic voice in the larger culture of men.

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Nixon's Program

Robert Lekachman

SUPERFICIALLY the initial months of the Nixon administration can be interpreted as something of a relief from the exaggerated fears and dismal visions of the President's more devoted enemies. The New Frontier has not been surrendered to the Indians. Ramshackle as ever, the Great Society stands. The gloomiest forecasts centered upon the programs administered by Health, Education, and Welfare, but thus far at any rate Secretary Robert Finch has averted massive financial bloodletting. Moreover, in spite of Strom Thurmond, the fabled Southern strategy of the Nixon campaign, and the ambiguities of the President's own utterances on the subject, the guidelines governing Title VI funding of local school districts under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act have been only bent here and there, not discarded. The appointment of Dr. James Allen as Commissioner of Education certainly suggests some inclination not to reverse the outcome of the Civil War.

Elsewhere the omens are equally cheerful or at worst ambiguous. Congressman Donald Rumsfeld's surrender of a safe House seat in order to become head of the Office of Economic Opportunity implies the continuation of that agency. Even the Job Corps camps which Mr. Nixon the candidate condemned as flat failures are promised a continued life on a more modest standard of living under the aegis of the Department of Labor. Head Start, though it is presently the target of a somewhat dubious evaluation, is for the coming year promised as much money as it got last year.

A resolute viewer of the bright side of life can find a little more that is pleasing. The Model Cities program has been adopted by Secretary Romney as his own. Mr. Finch has actually asked for more money with which to enlarge the studies now underway in New Jersey into the effects of negative income taxes. There is manifest a Presidential disposition to proceed against at least two of the many tax inequities which make the American system of so-called progressive taxation something of an international laughing stock. These are: the tax assessment of individuals and families whose incomes put them below the poverty line and, at the other end of the scale, the total escape from tax liability of fat cats whose incomes each year run in excess of $200,000.

The much touted budget reassessment, received with yawns when it was finally released on April 15, has not proved to be any occasion for alarm, either. "The President's objectives," it proclaimed, were "threefold:. . . to make the expenditure cuts that are a necessary part of efforts to combat inflation; to bring federal outlays under control; and to begin redirecting ongoing federal programs toward his administration's goals." Fair enough, at least if it were possible to identify the goals in question. But all that the fanfare announced was a small stage army of some fifty minor alterations in the last Johnson budget. The two largest cuts were the least likely to stick. Of the $4 billion in announced savings, $1.1 billion comes from the Pentagon, but more than half of that figure represents a problematical reduction of B-52 bombing raids in South Vietnam. The other large saving amounts to $1 billion to be derived from smaller and postponed increases in Social Security benefits. Here again the outcome is uncertain. Congress, which has recently awarded itself a 40 per cent pay rise, may feel obliged to give the old folks a bit more than the 7 per cent improvement in their monthly checks which the administration has recommended.

Not very many of his constituents have ever expected a great deal from Mr. Nixon and it might plausibly be argued that in his initial months in office the President has fulfilled expectations. He never promised much action and he has delivered. Mr. Nixon is not a thoroughgoing reactionary, but on the other hand his public record has never betrayed much trace of original thought about domestic needs. Instead, as a prudent conservative, he publicly seeks better administration of programs invented by more imaginative men, patient sorting of the successful from the unsuccessful in job training, urban renewal, welfare administration, and so on, and careful balancing of the interests of blacks and whites, Northerners and Southerners, and urban and suburban dwellers.

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Before I complete this penance of fair-mindedness, I must note another respect in which the administration has been unexpectedly temperate. This is control of inflation. In the demonology of American politics Republican administrations traditionally consort with depressions and recessions and Democratic regimes with wars and riots. But possibly because Mr. Nixon is aware of this association, having himself suffered through three Eisenhower recessions (he reportedly is convinced that he lost the 1960 election because unemployment rose in the summer and early autumn of election year), he has studiously refrained from an abrupt braking of the economy, which would be certain to cause substantial unemployment. His economic counselor, Arthur F. Burns, and his Council of Economic Advisers, though noticeably more conservative than their Democratic predecessors, are responsible economists who, in a time of racial discord and high black unemployment, know better than to advocate the trading-off of very much unemployment in favor of a reduced rate of price inflation.

Last year the country chose to elect a conservative, non-charismatic politician who promised them a quieter life, an end to the Vietnam war, a firm hand on inflation, and an improvement in the management of the federal bureaucracy. In Washington, if no place else, life *is* quieter. Mr. Nixon, keener of vision than most, perceives progress toward peace in Southeast Asia. Although the pace of inflation is notably unchecked, the administration is making the right noises and probably even some of the right moves to bring results pretty soon. As for the federal establishment, nobody in his right mind could expect even gifted Republican businessmen to produce instant results. It is possible, then, that in contrast to the activist types who enter the White House equipped with unfulfillable challenges to greatness and commitments to get the country moving again, Mr. Nixon merits a modest quantum of praise—administered naturally in the lowered tones favored in Republican Washington—for restraint, caution, temperance, and conciliation.

UNFORTUNATELY this quasi-quietism simply won't do as a recipe for social harmony in a racially and politically torn country. The reasons the Nixon strategy is unlikely to give even the appearance of success for very long derive partly from the character of national needs and partly from the direction of national policy at the end of eight years of Democratic administration. The Kennedy-Johnson years ended in a whimper as far as domestic policy goes; even their most successfully executed programs were demonstrated to be inadequate responses to the problems which they were designed to solve. Possibly the least flawed achievement was the attainment of something like full employment. By historical standards (though not by post-World War II European and Japanese criteria) an unemployment rate below 3.5 per cent probably represents the best American performance we are likely to get until we succeed in integrating into our labor force blacks, Puerto Ricans, and rural whites. Although the Vietnam war has had something to do with high employment, there is no need to deny the Keynesians their fiscal policy success. The 1964 tax cut was that truly rare event, a public policy which worked according to plan and prediction. Walter Heller and the Council of Economic Advisers *said* that a major tax cut would, through its multiplier impact, expand the 1964 Gross National Product to produce nearly full employment, and, *mirabile dictu,* they were quite correct. One cannot say as much for some of the later forecasts made by the economists.

The more important of the other legislative innovations of the Kennedy-Johnson era include Medicare (proposed in a more generous form fifteen years earlier by Harry Truman), aid to public education, and the War on Poverty. Of the three, the last may yet deliver some unexpected results. Despite the botching or sabotage of many programs sponsored by OEO, it may turn out that the community action and neighborhood legal services programs of the War on Poverty will produce more lasting consequences than some of its better-funded, more conventional programs. The Supreme Court decision in April of this year which outlawed residency requirements as a condition of welfare eligibility, for example, was the result of a case fought through the courts by poverty lawyers. Another of their cases, to be heard at a later date by the Supreme Court, claims the right of welfare recipients to a hearing before their assistance can be cut off.

This is not the occasion for detailed discussion of programs which are in any event so familiar. What I want to make clear is a judgment of the significance of the limited changes which they wrought. In the case of the 1964-65 series of welfare measures, the program was limited, conservative (with the partial exception of some OEO experiments), and always underfinanced. Nevertheless, this was the first successful movement for social change of even a moderate, meliorative variety since the first Roosevelt administration.

It is plain, however, that the Great Society had stalled by the end of 1965, and if we are to understand where a new President is starting from and why we should not rejoice unduly at his restraint in tampering with Democratic programs, we should not forget that the original Kennedy-Johnson programs existed on lean rations at a time when price inflation and rising population would by themselves have required substantially larger appropriations just to maintain them at their original levels. Appropriations for the

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schools under the Secondary and Elementary Education Act have never risen above 50 per cent of Congressional authorization. The War on Poverty has done well to get as much money each year as it got the one before. The propaganda for Model Cities has been a great deal more generous than the appropriations recommended by the President or approved by Congress. Rent supplements and public housing have been the annual victims of Congressional budget cutters. For some time the Congressional disposition has been to trim welfare support, impose more onerous conditions upon mothers who receive Aid to Dependent Children allotments, and restrict the scope of Medicare coverage. The Great Society was a starved social experiment years before the Nixon administration began to reevaluate it.

The Republicans' mean-spirited reaction might be taken more calmly as part of an inevitable period of national digestion of legislative novelties if only one could be confident that all of the novelties would survive an extended period of financial malnutrition. Of course this would be to suppose in turn that eight years of liberal Democratic administration had modified significantly the structure of American plutocracy, either by redistributing income in the direction of equality or by diffusing power among some constituencies not used to its exercise. But neither of these alterations in our economic arrangements has been either attained or sought for.

Today income is distributed very much as it was in 1961. Now as then the lucky 5 per cent at the top of the income pyramid collect 20 per cent while the unhappy 20 per cent of the population at the base of the pyramid struggle along with a symmetrical 5 per cent of the national income. This pattern is not the mere consequence of blind chance, much less the play of free markets, for much in the policy of two Democratic Presidents was calculated to promote inequality. The first two tax initiatives of the Kennedy administration liberalized depreciation guidelines and granted 7 per cent investment allowances to the business community—exceedingly valuable privileges for the prosperous folk who run and own large corporations. Fiscal success that it was, the tax cut of 1964 was no victory for egalitarianism. With a few minor exceptions the tax reform provisions of the original measure failed to survive, and what remained was a measure which reduced corporate taxes and cut the top personal income tax rate from 91 to 70 per cent. The effect was to reduce burdens on prosperous taxpayers and thus to make the tax system less progressive.

Morever, many of the new social benefits, notably Medicare, were financed largely through the Social Security mechanism which in itself contains a highly regressive tax feature. Because Congress maintains low ceilings on the maximum amount of income subject to Social Security levy, those with lower incomes are the exclusive source of periodic increases of the levy. This is an important reason why working-class and lower-middle-class taxpayers have been screaming for relief. And their plight has been aggravated by the sharp rise in real-estate and sales taxes upon which states and localities must depend to finance schools and other services. By comparison with the inhabitants of other advanced industrial states, Americans are lightly taxed. But the system produces so many inequities that many Americans feel, and some actually are, harshly dealt by.

THE DEMOCRATS did nothing to bring the tax system into some less whimsical relationship with one's ability to pay. As the system now operates, individuals of quite modest incomes pay larger percentages of those incomes than do their more affluent fellow citizens. And the number and the value of the loopholes increase as incomes rise. Overall, for example, taxpayers who earn more than $100,000 annually pay *lower* effective rates than those in the $50,000-$100,000 bracket. Up to this moment, Congress has been far more disposed to widen than to close or narrow the tax hatches that make this possible.

There is one further comment to be made about income distribution. Any inflationary period favors the recipients of the more volatile forms of income. Thus it was that in the fourth quarter of 1968, in spite of tax surcharges and the expenses arising from credit shortages, American manufacturing corporations earned $8.7 billion after taxes. This was a pleasant 5.2 per cent of sales, higher than the preceding quarter's 4.9 per cent or the 5.1 per cent record for all of 1968. As the *Wall Street Journal* approvingly noted, this level of profit has been matched or exceeded only five times since 1950.

Profit, it can more or less plausibly be argued, is the reward of efficient enterprise. But inflation often rewards most richly those whose claims to efficiency are the most tenuous. The tax laws in an inflationary period grant stock speculators, real estate promoters, and conglomerate organizers something very like the right to print their own money (although that last bubble appears to have burst). This too is part of the reason why so many people are feeling no richer or are actually feeling even poorer at a time when the GNP bounds forward each quarter, industrial output rises, and the familiar roll call of statistical indicators seems to prove that Americans never had it so good. In fact, as the Teamsters' Nicholas Kisburg recently demonstrated in a study of real earnings in the New York metropolitan area, higher taxes and price inflation often leave even tightly organized workers no better off than they had been when wages, prices, and taxes were each rising less steeply.

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As for any potential redistribution of economic power, what seems to have been going on instead is another movement toward further concentration of assets and corporate control. Recent Federal Trade Commission data reveal continued acceleration in the pace of corporate mergers. In 1966 there were 1,746 company acquisitions, in the next year 2,384, and last year no fewer than 4,003.* All this was of course in addition to the normal growth of the established goliaths of American manufacturing and finance. One recent dodge, the bank holding company, allows banks to acquire unrelated manufacturing and distributing enterprises in a fashion which reminds a good many observers unpleasantly of the operations of the Japanese Zaibatsu or the German industrial banks which have traditionally merged financial and industrial power.

It is no exaggeration to say that when the Johnson administration passed into history, it left the Republicans a country operating at full economic blast, equipped with an inadequate but marginally improved set of social services (by comparison with 1960), and handicapped by a distribution of income and wealth possibly still less equitable than in 1960 and a concentration of economic and military power far more menacing than the military-industrial complex which had aroused Mr. Eisenhower's apprehensions.

What I have been describing is close to the policies of classic English conservatism: inegalitarian as to power, income, and wealth, and disposed to pay most of us off with high employment and modest social benefits. There have been occasions when that policy was, if not appropriate, at least successful in both England and the United States. This is not one of those occasions. I do not intend to rehearse the familiar catalogue of social needs which a new administration, saddled with an expensive war and harassed by a serious inflation, must nevertheless cope with. Two concluding statements will suffice. Massive new funding is required for federal programs now on the statute books, among them aid to schools, Medicare, public housing, model cities, welfare, and manpower training. In addition, federal assistance is urgently required to bail out the states and localities in their attempts to finance the growing burden of public services out of taxes which offer little financial and less political scope for increase.

Race and the cities: we cannot avoid as a nation the confrontation which they impose upon us. As a people we have faltered before the choice of a full integrationist strategy designed to open white suburbs and white schools to black families and, in the inner-city ghettos, a strategy calculated to make life humanly tolerable and financially viable. Both approaches require very large quantities of resources for any hope of success, and although we all know by now that money alone does not resolve racial tensions deeply rooted in human prejudice and American history, we should be equally aware that these problems are highly unlikely to be ameliorated in the absence of a very large national commitment of public funds.

Here then is President Nixon's dilemma. A conservative by temperament, affiliation, and political choice, elected by rural and suburban seekers after lower taxes and improved public order, he is faced with menacing maladies of race and urban life whose treatment will surely require that large wads of cash be diverted from the thrifty white voters who installed him in the White House to the blacks, Puerto Ricans, and Mexican Americans who preferred Mr. Humphrey. And yet there appears to be no money available. When the war in Vietnam subsides, the generals and admirals will have grasping hands extended for the funds to buy new and more expensive toys. And if the President resists the military, he will face a clamor (which he himself has encouraged) for tax reduction.

WITHIN THIS grim context, the unfolding Nixon domestic program seems a good deal less reassuring than I was earlier suggesting. The President is disinclined to support urban programs not because there is no money available for them, for, of course, there *is* money available, financially if not politically. Repeal of the investment tax credit (unvitiated by a promise to reduce other taxes) would supply the Treasury with over $3 billion each year for domestic spending. Or, as Andrew Brimmer, a governor of the Federal Reserve Board, has recently urged, the tax surcharge on corporate profits might be *raised* from 10 to 15 per cent. It is, after all, the business sector which is the major source of inflationary pressure. Accordingly it is the business sector, not the unhappy consumer, that ought, on economic grounds as well as on grounds of equity, to be squeezed. A real effort to close such enormous loopholes as the tax treatment of real estate and capital gains, building depreciation, charitable and foundation allowances, and the mineral depletion scandal could readily generate anywhere from $5 to $15 billion in additional tax receipts. A modest slice from the Pentagon establishment could easily grab another $5-$10 billion. We could—but of course we will not—control inflation and at one and the same time finance social reform at decent levels.

President Nixon's actual tax and expenditure policies have decidedly different aims from these. The administration tax program, sent to Con-

* Large companies acquired small ones. Often large companies acquired other large companies. In 1966 the 200 largest corporations bought 33 other companies with total assets of $2.4 billion. The score for 1967 was 67 companies endowed with assests of $5.4 billion. Last year the giant 200 picked up 74 companies and assets of $6.9 billion.

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gress on April 21, is a carefully carpentered piece of merchandise. It commences with a major surprise, the repeal of the 7 per cent investment tax credit and the companion 3 per cent allowance now granted to utilities. Mr. Nixon adroitly couples with this proposal, presumably highly unpalatable to his business supporters, a promise to reduce the tax surcharge from 10 to 5 per cent, come January 1, 1970. As far as the Treasury is concerned, the two changes offset each other and the net revenue effect will approximate zero. This is not the way to generate additional funds for urban programs, although on January 16, 1970 the tax system will be a trifle less unfair than it now is.

The remainder of the program is equally astute politically. The President puts a liberal face upon mild changes whch will no doubt be used as arguments against more substantial tax reforms. The new "low-income allowance" will, according to Treasury estimates, "remove more than 2 million of our low-income families from the federal tax rolls and assure that persons or families in poverty pay no federal income taxes." At present a family of four with income in excess of $3,000 is subject to some tax. After the Nixon reform only families that earn over $3,500 will be assessed. Today a married couple whose total income is $2,300 still pays a $100 federal income tax. The Nixon plan would relieve such a couple of all liability. And so on. As far as it goes, the changes are commendable and long overdue.

The revenue lost by this bow to equity is to be replaced by imposing tax liabilities upon some affluent citizens who legally have been able to avoid such liability under existing tax regulations. The key innovation is the "minimum income tax" which, says the President, will impose a "50 per cent limitation on the use of the principal tax preferences"—notably not including tax-exempt securities and capital gains. In the absence of specific legislation, it is difficult to say just how much importance should be attached to this device. Even Congressman Mills and the New York *Times* have reacted by stating a preference for a direct assault upon the loopholes themselves, surely a more fundamental approach to the problem.

As on so many other occasions, one is led almost irresistibly to say of a Nixon action: it could have been worse. Small changes in the right direction are better than none at all, unless of course they spoil the chances to make more substantial improvements later on. But it would take a real optimist to think that there ever existed an opportunity to be spoiled in this administration to do away with oil depletion allowances, inheritance tax escape hatches, capital gains avoidance devices, and the rest of a list which costs the Treasury up to $50 billion a year in uncollected revenue. My guess is that if Congress enacts this package, it will be about as much tax reform as we can sensibly anticipate in the next four years.

Nixon's expenditure policy should be divided into its current and, one hopes, a post-Vietnam phase. The current Nixon budget, as I have said, is the last Johnson budget modified by a very small number of changes. As far as social policy goes, the most significant of them may turn out to be the slight reduction in the funds sought for Model Cities. Romney intends to spread out what is left after the cut over a much larger number of communities. The effect almost inevitably will be the conversion of a scheme designed to operate powerfully upon a limited number of slum areas into a conventional federal subsidy spread thinly on the usual political assumptions over so many claimants as to eliminate the possibility of substantial success anywhere. The most disastrous current failure of course is the President's refusal to take on the Pentagon, which is the major consumer of federal tax receipts and, one would have thought, the likeliest candidate for budgetary curtailment.

After Vietnam what is promised in the way of new federal spending is revenue-sharing with the states and tax credits for business firms that invest in poverty areas or hire and train the hard-core unemployed. The strategy is faithful to the Nixon themes of decentralization and reliance upon the energies and ingenuity of private business. Both of these devices are potentially retrogressive in their effects, although revenue-sharing had liberal origins and carries some continuing liberal sponsorship. Walter Heller, while still Chairman of the Johnson Council of Economic Advisers, proposed distribution to the states of a portion of annual federal income tax receipts, with few strings attached. As he saw it there were three practical merits to the device: the states would be relieved of some of the dreadful financial poverty in which they now conduct their affairs; revenue-sharing might strike many Congressmen as a preferable alternative to tax reduction in a time of fiscal surplus; and finally, state government itself would be appreciably strengthened. Heller thought of revenue-sharing as supplementary to the wide variety of categorical grants to states and localities which had been federal practice since the early days of the New Deal.

The idea was quickly adopted by such astute Congressional conservatives as Melvin Laird and Charles Goodell who saw in revenue-sharing a potential *substitute* for federal social programs. It would appear that Laird and Goodell were rather more astute than Heller in their perception of the political potentialities of revenue-sharing. In fact, there is rather more wrong with the scheme from a liberal perspective than there is right with it. It is no accident that the governors have to a man favored and the mayors with equal unanimity opposed revenue-sharing, for

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there is no way of assuring that the states will treat the large cities any more equitably with federal funds than they do under the various state-aid formulas now in use. There is a racial count against the device as well. It is exceedingly difficult even under existing categorical grants to control the ways in which states spend federal money. Funds given to the states without strings or standards are certain to be disbursed in the South and elsewhere with scant attention to racial equity. The last and possibly the most powerful argument against revenue-sharing is embedded in the history of social innovation in the United States. In our conservative land, social change has come with extreme rarity from the states. Where progress has been made, it has usually been at the federal level. An occasional activist President is from time to time able to push Congress in progressive directions. To diminish the political importance of the federal government and increase that of the states is still further to shift the balance of power in a conservative direction.

Nixon's favorite scheme, granting tax incentives to business for applied social work, is subject to both technical and social reservation. Technically there is great difficulty in writing a statute which would genuinely reward the *extra* efforts at ghetto investment and job training engaged in by corporations without giving subsidies to corporations that in the absence of the reward would have followed the same policies anyway.

The larger, social issue is one that I have earlier alluded to. Are we going to encourage the drift of two separate societies, one black and the other white? Or are we going to strive still against the odds to achieve an integrationist resolution of the American dilemma? There is no doubt that tax incentives for ghetto investment support a separationist strategy. It is this perception which explains the odd alliance of the Nixonites and such Black Power advocates as Roy Innis.

I thus come to a brief but unhappy conclusion. The Nixon domestic program is drastically inadequate to meet the social needs with which only the federal government can cope. This is bad enough, especially since the President shows no sense of urgency in somehow scraping together more resources for urban programs. But what is worse is the direction in which the signposts point. The danger is real that the more innovative policies of recent years will be whittled away or blurred in their impact, that revenue-sharing with the states will strengthen conservative political elements throughout the country, and that tax incentives will encourage the drift to white and black separatism which now menaces us. The voices of the new administration are low and courteous, but their message is not one of joy.

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Death & the Physician

Eric J. Cassell

But at my back I always hear
Time's wingèd chariot hurrying near.
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.
ANDREW MARVELL

FOR MOST of us in the Western world, premature death is no longer imminent. The death of infants is unusual, the death of children rare, and the death of young adults so improbable that it must be removed from the realistic possibilities of young life.

There are few new things in our world with such wide personal, social, and cultural meaning as the loss of the imminence of premature death, a phenomenon which is unique to the generation born since the 1940's. For young men's lives, "Time's wingèd chariot" no longer hurries, and the picking of rosebuds may be done at one's leisure. In essence, the young now have "limitless" time.

But this dramatic change, won by the control of disease—primarily infectious disease—has a further implication: if disability or disfunction occurs in an individual now, the cause will more probably arise from within the man than from disease striking from without.

I do not think that the meaning of this change in the pattern of disease and the availability of time can be overemphasized. To document it, let us look at what has happened to the patterns of disease in the last few decades, and sharpen the point by contrasting our present disease pattern with that of the so-called "developing" nations.

Before the 1930's, the chance that a patient would have his disease improved decisively by a visit to a physician was very small. Except for the surgeon, whose basic tools have changed little, the physician's bag held more comfort than cure. The drug formulary contained a few specific cardiac drugs, thyroid extract, insulin (in 1925), something for gout, a few other specifics, and then a thousand things for the relief of symptoms, some effective, some not. Men made reputations as pneumonia doctors for their ability to sit through the night at the patient's bedside, waiting for the crisis to pass. Ears drained endlessly, the mastoid scar was commonplace, and sinus trouble held the danger of meningitis and brain abscess. Postoperative pneumonia was a dread complication, and infection and the real limitations of anesthesia tied the hands of surgeons. Even in the 1930's, syphilis was still the great mimic, and the *majority* of urban adults had evidence of past tuberculosis, although both diseases were already on their way out. Bellevue at that time had a whole ward for erysipelas (a disease most people have never even heard of today).

In short, the everyday burden of illness was considerable and an expected commonplace of life. The role of the physician was to comfort, to relieve, to diagnose, and to prognosticate. There was, however, a close correspondence between what patients expected of the physician and what he could in fact deliver.

Today, by contrast, the physician can help as never before. The chances are overwhelming that the course of a patient's disease will be decisively affected by a visit to a physician. From antibiotics that banish infections to tranquilizers that banish straitjackets, an aura of effectiveness has been created. But in this time of greatest accomplishment, the widespread expectation of cure has created an oddly paradoxical gap between what is expected of physicians and what they can deliver. We shall return to this point later.

The incidence of infant and child mortality in a society provides a useful criterion for the comparative study of disease patterns. In many developing nations, the death of children is pitifully commonplace. In the United Arab Republic, for example, one out of five children dies between ages one and fifteen. In Mexico, one out of 30 will die in the same period. But in the United States, only one child in 130 dies between the ages of one and fifteen.

What are the causes from which these children die? When a child dies in the United Arab Republic and Mexico, the death is generally due to an infectious disease (bronchitis, intestinal infections and diarrhea, and pneumonia). When a child dies in the United States, he generally

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dies of an accident, a congenital malformation, or cancer. We have been made aware of infant mortality in this country because we are distressed that ours is not the lowest rate in the world (and it is not). The infant death rate for the United States as a whole would be lower were it not for the fact that among the indigent it is much higher than among the remainder of the population. Thus here, as in other examples of disease, it is possible to have an underdeveloped area exist as an island within a highly developed society. (A striking example of such backwardness existing amid advance is the shocking and primitive disease rate of the American Indian.) It is equally possible, of course, to have islands of advance amid general backwardness, and that is why it should be noted that in discussing premature mortality, we are talking about the Western world wherever it may exist—in the United States, England, or even among the wealthy in India.

THE DIFFERENCE in causes of death between countries is also seen in the United States between generations. Our daily experience tells us how different things are from what they were before. Although the infection itself is still common among both children and adults, who can remember somebody dying recently of a "strep" throat? There is some evidence that, while streptococcal infection may occur in all classes of the population, serious complications arising from it are virtually limited to the indigent. The mortality statistics for pneumonia are similarly revealing: in 1935, the death rate from pneumonia in children ages one through four was one in 1,100; in 1961, the death rate in the same age group was one in 7,000.

Not only have the infectious diseases become less common, but where they remain, their fatal potential has often been diminished. Measles is an excellent example. In 1964, the United Arab Republic reported 14,000 cases of measles with almost 8,000 deaths. In the same year, in the United States, 458,000 cases of measles were reported with only 451 deaths. (A note of caution is necessary before such data can be taken too literally. The difference in numbers of cases is due to population differences, but also the relationship between actual numbers of cases and reported cases tends to be less meaningful where public health services are not highly developed. Nonetheless, the trend and the lesson are clear.)

It is generally believed that differences in mortality rates from diseases such as measles are primarily due to nutritional differences. Certainly, the child suffering from protein-calorie malnutrition has a much greater risk of dying or suffering serious complications from the common contagious diseases of childhood than do our children. But it is important to realize that other factors are at work here too. The recent epidemic of "Hong Kong" influenza makes the point most sharply. There are many now alive who remember the influenza epidemic of 1917-1918. They would have no difficulty recalling young friends or relatives who died during its ravages. But what young person (and for the purposes of this argument, we can define "young" as under forty) does any of us know who died during the present epidemic? The fact that we have to search our minds for an answer is itself an indication of how radically things have changed. Those few people who did die during the 1968 epidemic were probably already suffering from some other condition to which influenza was terminally appended. Statistics confirm this observation: the death rate from influenza in the period 1921 through 1925 was one out of every 1,000 population; in the period 1956 to 1960 (encompassing the last previous Asian influenza epidemic) the death rate was one out of 50,000.

Although there is some dispute over the matter, in general scientists do not believe that the 1918 variety of influenza virus was more deadly than the present variant. Rather, in the post-World War I setting, which included crowding, poor hygiene, and other factors that seem to make disease worse, influenza infection prepared the way for bacterial complications. In the days before antibiotics, those bacterial complications (pneumonia, bronchitis, ear infections, meningitis, for example) were not infrequently fatal. It is hard to document which feature of society was most responsible for the high fatality of the "flu" of that era, because so many things in our lives contribute to our pattern of illness. Although it sounds unscientific to say so, it appears to be true that present times are simply healthier than past times. Health is a concatenation of effects, with good health promoting good health and disease promoting disease. At this juncture in history, our society's "resistance" to infectious diseases is high.

Still, while our illness pattern has changed drastically, and the change comes from the way we live rather than from any single factor in our lives (including antibiotics—though they have certainly made a big difference), it should be stressed that the change is reversible. In a sense, like "the antiseptic baby and the prophylactic pup," we live in a large "astrodome" with the infectious diseases kept out by an invisible shield. The shield, however, is as fragile as our social stability. The infectious diseases lie in wait for war, natural disaster, or starvation to prepare the way for their inevitable return.

The changes that have occurred in the patterns of illness and death are not limited to the young. For the aged, too, things have changed. That we all die remains true, but the when and the how have shifted.

What is "old" now? A generation ago, the seventy-year-old man was a relatively uncommon creature, considered old by himself and his family. The life expectancy of the aged has increased

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considerably in the last generation. A person of sixty can now expect to live eighteen more years. A person of seventy has a life expectancy of almost eighty-two years. Although life itself has not been significantly extended, more people are living longer than before.

"Pneumonia may well be called the friend of the aged," Sir William Osler once said. "Taken off by it in an acute, short, not often painful illness, the old man escapes those 'cold gradations of decay' so distressing to himself and to his friends." Pneumonia is still the old man's friend, but the man is now older, and the pneumonia is a late complication of some other disease, not the unexpected sword of fate. Here again, the death rates serve to make the point. In 1935, the death rates from pneumonia for ages twenty-five through forty-four were 39 per 100,000; for ages forty-five through sixty-four, 94 per 100,000; for ages sixty-five through seventy-four, 242 per 100,000. In 1961, at ages twenty-five through forty-four, six per 100,000 population died from pneumonia; at ages forty-five through sixty-four, the rate was 24 per 100,000; at ages sixty-five through seventy-four, the rate was 95 per 100,000.

Further, and perhaps more important, the extension of life has meant the extension of *useful* life, functional life. The old among us may have many diseases (they generally do), but they often have little real illness. They may walk more slowly, or even with a cane, but they walk—and frequently to work. They may have glasses for their eyes, amplifiers for their ears, but they see and hear and function. They work and play for a long time. Indeed, perhaps the most disabling thing to happen to the old in recent times has been the mandatory necessity to retire at age sixty-five. Previously functional individuals are laid aside and frequently stagnate, perhaps even die, from their own uselessness. They have not been trained to combat the stress of retirement or to meet the demand for new resources of creativity and growth. Biologically speaking, however, there is no such thing as standing still; there is only function or atrophy.

WITH THE CHANGE in disease patterns has come a change in the meaning of disability. We no longer equate illness with disability, nor do we equate the disability of an organ with the disability of the whole man. Organ disability, in other words, does not mean functional disability. We replace the arm with pincers, and the leg with a fancy stump. If a man cannot work at his original job, we retrain him. We train the blind to work in darkness and the deaf to transcribe stenotyping. As a culture, we have become guorous form of the tuberculosis patient became function.

This does not mean that disability has altogether disappeared. On the contrary, it is as widespread as ever. But there has been a decisive change, all too seldom recognized as such, in the direction from which it comes. Disability is now more likely to arise from within the man or from his society (or his interaction with it) than from exogenous disease. It is now primarily emotional, genetic (birth defects, etc.), or social.

For who are the disabled if not the non-functional? And who is less functional than the "misfit"—the alienated person, the addict, the alcoholic? Perhaps even our fabled "Corporation Man"—tightly jacketed by a set of rules and procedures which control the direction of his creative growth—might be called a disabled man. Creativity and growth are tender things. They emerge slowly and tentatively as we age, and wither quickly if discouraged or stifled. But they are the stuff of which an era is made.

It would not be too difficult to show that the most common disabling diseases of our time—heart disease, certain cancers, and automobile accidents—are in themselves born of our culture. Coronary heart disease, our number-one cause of death and disability, seems to have risen to that prominence because of the habits of our society: a diet rich in fat and refined sugars; lack of physical exercise; some psychological factors (quickly accepted by laymen, but difficult to prove scientifically); and cigarette smoking. Automobile accidents, which are the leading cause of death among young adults, have now been shown to have their roots primarily in alcoholism and in the social and emotional ills of drivers. (In a fatal automobile accident, the overwhelming probability is that one of the drivers will have been drinking and that further, he—because it is usually a male—will have had previous contact with social agencies, either because of alcohol or past misdemeanors.)

This is surely a new kind of disability, whose roots are intertwined with the changes that have been wrought in the disease patterns of our generation. We have seen how the threat of imminent death in the young has left us as a meaningful probability, and how the whole fabric of our culture is involved in the change. Old and young alike have become the beneficiaries of a new gift made possible by the changes in the patterns of disability. That gift is time, time in which to live. But the gift of time has not been without its price. The threat of a limited life imposes a corresponding demand, or need, to perform; the expectation of death imposes a sense of control and restraint. In this era, the price exacted by the gift of time has often been a loss of that sense of control, and a consequent anxiety, or—even worse—a loss of the ability to function creatively.

It is interesting in this regard to contrast the present with the late 18th and early 19th centuries, when death at a young age was frequent. Tuberculosis, one of the most common causes of early death at that time, was greatly romanticized.

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The literature of the era is pervaded by a sense of the beauty of early death, and the pale, thin, languorous form of the tuberculosis patient became the fashion ideal of beauty—often copied, one might add, by today's adolescent.* But what is of greatest interest is the fact that sufferers of tuberculosis were thought to be endowed with some special genius. Their drive to produce seemed enormous, as though a strong wind blew within, hastening them to their artistic task and fanning the flame of their creativity. But they all knew of their impending death (including some who didn't die, almost to their disappointment), and I think that knowledge imposed the final deadline of disease, against which they all worked so feverishly.

I know a young graduate student, by contrast, who had been pursuing his career in a dilatory manner. Then he was found to have a fatal disease. When told so, he suddenly began to perform and finish his work—to become something in the limited time left to him. The demand to perform was imposed by the diagnosis of imminent death. How many of us have not played the game of, "What would you do if you knew you were going to die in—?" Generally, rather than playing out their lives in the pursuit of futile games, as a popular television program would suggest, people feel the need for accomplishment in the short time left to them.

A SENSE of time develops as we grow up. Children seem to have little or no such sense. A child's total concern seems to be with the moment. An hour is meaningless; next week may be a forever away. A real sense of time begins to appear in adolescence. Adolescence is also the period when fantasies of early death occur. "I know that I'm going to die young," is so commonly heard among adolescents that it must be taken as an expression of group feeling rather than of individual experience. As a cultural phenomenon, of course, this feeling stems from the knowledge that in earlier periods it *has* happened: the list of talented men who died young is long. Its attraction for today's youth, however, lies more in its beauty as an idea: a short, post-adolescent catharsis, then death. One has done one's work—given the world one's talents, and then, before being challenged by continued existence, one expires. What would one do if one had to go on—and on and on?

The fantasy of premature death in today's adolescents may be seen as a response to the tensions arising from the loosening of parental control. It is also, in my view, a response to the perception that premature death is in fact among the unlikeliest of eventualities.

One might stop at this point and ask whether the young know that they are freed from the threat of death. I think they do, because despite the stories of their parents and the literature, as they look around them, their friends are all alive. Some have been sick (and some very sick) but virtually all are alive. Whether or not we wish to acknowledge them consciously, the facts of life are known to us and influence our behavior. The absence of death is one of the facts of life to the young. (This awareness of the absence of death should not be confused with that wonderful feeling of omnipotence in men that denies the possibility of their own death. Omnipotence is a necessary psychological mechanism that may operate most strongly in situations such as war where death is common.)

Now, while the gift of time must surely be marked as a great blessing, the *perception* of time, as stretching out endlessly before us, is somewhat threatening. Many of us function best under deadlines, and tend to procrastinate when time limits are not set. Time limits are controls, and some controls seem to make people more comfortable. Thus, this unquestioned boon, the extension of life, and the removal of the threat of premature death, carries with it an unexpected anxiety: the anxiety of an unlimited future.

In the young, the sense of limitless time has apparently imparted not a feeling of limitless opportunity, but increased stress and anxiety, in addition to the anxiety which results from other modern freedoms: personal mobility, a wide range of occupational choice, and independence from the limitations of class and familial patterns of work. Scientists have a certain abhorrence of unitary theories of causality, but it is tempting to look at the rebellion now open and active among the young all over the world and suggest that, in part, it has its origins in the anxieties born of the new freedom from death and the consequent need to choose how to live. Many observers of the young radical movement have noted that its members tend to be more prepared to offer criticism of the present than to put forward a program for the future. My own contact with many individual young adults leads me to the same conclusion, especially for the males among them. A certain aimlessness (often ringed around with great social consciousness) characterizes discussions about their own aspirations. The future is endless, and their inner demands seem minimal. Although it may appear uncharitable to say so, they seem to be acting in a way best described as "childish"—particularly in their lack of a time sense. They behave as though there were no tomorrow, or as though the time limits imposed by the biological facts of life had become so vague

* Tom Moore, in his diary for February 1828, reports a conversation between himself and Byron:

"I look pale," said Byron, looking in the mirror, "I should like to die of a Consumption."

"Why?" asked Moore.

"Because the ladies would all say, 'Look at that poor Byron, how interesting he looks in dying.' " (See "Consumption and the Romantic Age" by René and Jean Dubos in *Curiosities of Medicine,* edited by Berton Roueché.)

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for them as to be nonexistent. To be sure, there are, as there have always been, young people whose own inner drive and goals require no outside demands. But they are, as they have always been, in the minority. For the others, the classical biosocial structure has failed to provide those limits that in the past have brought forth function.

All this is probably less true for women, because the reproductive aspects of the biosocial structure have not changed. The criteria for femininity, that is, seem more easily met at present than the criteria for masculinity. Nevertheless, women provide the most clear-cut example of the way in which the pattern of our lives has been influenced by the changes in the pattern of our diseases in past decades. Women have gained time directly, by the extension of our own lives, and indirectly, from the gains of their children. It may be said that one of the major social changes in this century has been the emergence of women—an emergence that might not have been possible were it not for the survival of the young. Because it no longer takes seven full-term pregnancies to produce five living children, and five living children to produce three adults, but merely 3.1 pregnancies to produce three adults, the time required for women to discharge their biological function has been markedly reduced. They are free to return to their own non-maternal functions very much more quickly. Late marriage becomes feasible (not merely as a birth-control device as in mainland China) because there will still be adequate time for childbearing. But late marriage also means individual development—college and careers—and that means aspirations apart from marriage. When frustrated (or "unperceived"), those aspirations mean boredom and unhappiness and the panoply of problems for the modern healthy woman that have come under popular discussion in recent years.

The difficulty in handling the newly won time is best demonstrated by young women because they are assaulted by the advance from all sides. An illegitimate pregnancy is an unnecessary absurdity in the 1960's because of the easy availability of effective birth control. Despite this, and to the continuing despair of physicians, illegitimate pregnancy among the comfortable—people who know how to avoid it—remains a problem. I observed before that modern disability most commonly arises from within the individual, and in that sense, many of these pregnancies can be regarded as self-induced disability—as accidents, that is to say, only in the loosest sense of the term. They serve to remind women of their (no longer) "secondary" role and frequently even to cripple their aspirations through guilt.

Legitimate pregnancies, too, can be utilized to avoid the promise and decrease the threat of an unlimited future. Coming too soon, or too close together, they can convince a woman (in denial of fact) that her biological function must necessarily override her own personal (or even marital) creative needs. Similarly, a woman who raises her children in constant fear of their impending death from every little fever (despite the informed boredom of her pediatrician about the same fever) is brought further along in life without having given heed to herself as a person. Now, if only some convenient female disease could occupy her remaining years, all would be unthinking bliss. Unfortunately, for the most part, gynecological disability has gone the way of the infectious diseases: increasingly rare, avoidable, or easily treatable. Thus the children, few in number and healthy, grow up, leaving her healthy, young (by modern standards)—and frequently useless.

The aged again serve to clarify the issues I have been discussing, primarily because they have been freed by the passage of time, and by their own aging, from some of the problems that face the young. Oddly, they do not have such problems because they do not perceive them as problems. They know they are going to die, and it doesn't seem to bother them much. I have had conversations with old people in which they discussed their approaching death with great calm, while their children seated nearby nearly fainted in distress. Being a burden—that is truly frightening; being an invalid, and being unable to do for oneself, causes real and well-based anxiety. But the fears of unlimited time have been removed. Now, great blessing, there isn't enough time. The aged have terrible disability problems. Disability is a *real* threat—but even so, the aged are apparently safe from themselves. When disability comes, it will come from outside themselves. (Unfortunately, of course, that is not always true. The aged are still their own worst enemy, along with the rest of us. Some are disabled by diseases that allow their fellows to carry on. But at least, unlike the young, they have more outside themselves on which to place blame.)

I HAVE USED the phrase "changes in patterns of disease" in speaking of what many people would refer to as changes in our general cultural climate. I have done so, of course, because I believe that in some measure our new cultural ills can be traced precisely to the prodigious successes which the medical profession has achieved in our lifetime. I think it fair, then, since physicians have been an intimate part—if by no means the only one—of the revolution in disease, that we look to them for some recognition of our new problem, and some indication of the direction in which we must all move toward its solution.

In medicine, there are, and always have been, two basic priorities. The first is the defense against imminent death. The second is the defense against disability.

Priority One thinking, the defense against im-

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minent death, operates properly in the period immediately following a heart attack, during and right after surgery, immediately after serious trauma, and during war or similar situations. The excitement of Priority One thinking was the basis for those Ben Casey-type television shows, so popular a few years ago: the camera panning from the cardiac monitor bearing its (hopefully) reassuring message to the nurse's hands passing an instrument from her tray to the deft fingers of the surgeon (whose character was drawn as though the surest defense against death were arrogance). The same kind of thinking, pervades emergency rooms, volunteer ambulance services, and all those situations where man seems separated from death by the softness of one heartbeat. And Priority One thinking is in the dreams of every boy who wants to be a doctor—the medical expression, perhaps, of the universal Walter Mitty fantasy.

Now, the basic threat in Priority One thinking, *death*, has not changed over the years; it has simply become less probable, and among the young, uncommon indeed. Nevertheless, death is death—final. And because nothing can change the awesome finality which is the meaning of the threat of death, it has become possible to maintain artificially the belief that the importance of Priority One thinking is just as great as it ever was. This in turn allows such thinking to be carried over into an area like that of the infectious diseases, where the threat of death has in fact become virtually nonexistent.

Thus, we frequently see among physicians, as well as among patients, an overreaction to minor infectious diseases, apparently based on the fear that the "minor" will become "major"—that a cold, say, will become pneumonia. But does it really matter (except in the aged) if a cold *does* become pneumonia? There is an old story about a patient with a cold who says to his doctor, "What if it turns into pneumonia?" The doctor is said to have answered, "Better if it were pneumonia. *That*, I can cure." If there were no antibiotics, it would be different. If there were no hospitals and operating rooms and surgeons and ambulances—but for most of us in the Western world, there *are* all these things. Just as the complex whole of our society seems to have changed our disease pattern, so the complex whole of our society has changed the meaning of potentially fatal diseases. (Again, in discussing the change in the meaning of disease, just as in discussing the change in the pattern of disease, concepts like the ones I have been using are justified only so long as the society remains stable.)

As a physician, I must admit that there is a certain romance in Priority One defense-against-death beliefs. There is a certain excitement in seeing the red streaks that run up the arm of a patient whose hand infection has begun to spread (a morbid excitement, perhaps, but that is a doctor's work). And to the patient, a very real fear—fear of illness and pain and even death. But the excitement all ends at the drugstore, when simply purchased tablets promptly end the threat in the majority of instances. (Untreated, the disease is dangerous, but then so is a car without brakes.)

Priority Two of medical care is the defense against disability. We have seen how the direction of disability for the young has been changed by the conquest of the infectious diseases and other recent advances. But curiously, in this most difficult task in medicine—defense against disability—the burden has increased. The young who do not die, grow old and suffer the diseases for which we still have no cure: arthritis, diabetes, heart disease, cancer. Children with previously fatal diseases now live disabled lives, needing continuing care.

This priority—defense-against-disability—contains the classical functions of physicians: to comfort and to relieve. Both are curiously inadequate for patient and doctor alike in the present era of the expectation of cure. It is far easier to escape to simpler, more basic, fears, to reduce the anxiety and danger that time has given us by maintaining the pretense that premature death is imminent and beyond our control.

The "romance" of acute disease, stubbornly maintained in the face of steadily mounting fact, can be explained in several ways. For the patient, the sense of an outward "threat" saves him from having to recognize that the real threat is life and that the real source of disability is within himself. And as for the physician, he, too, is a person with all the same fears as his patient. (Judging by the increased frequency of depression, suicide, and divorce among physicians, they know more than they let on about the real facts of life.) But there are other reasons why physicians need to keep the compact with their patients, and maintain the "romance" of acute disease, the importance of Priority One defense-against-death thinking, in the face of all evidence to the contrary. All the long and continuing training of physicians has been, and (sadly) still is, oriented toward solutions to Priority One problems: the defense against imminent death, the treatment of acute disease, and the protection against imminent danger. But as we have seen, these are no longer the greatest dangers facing us, or those for which we require most help. Dealing with *life* is difficult and painful, and that is most often where our physicians fail to help us. They have solutions, but not to our most pressing problems. If one has no solutions to the real problems of this world, it is easier to continue to maintain, no matter how artificially, the primacy of the problems for which one does have solutions.

Let us look at two areas in which inappropriate solutions have been advanced to new problems. Pediatrics is the specialty where the con-

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quest of the infectious diseases has produced the greatest changes. Many pediatricians are plainly bored, and some even question the need for their specialty. Where Priority One problems previously demanded their time and their skill, now such problems can often be handled by telephone. Pediatricians have responded to this new situation in various ways. Some have sought to place the burden of everyday care in the hands of nurses or other paramedical personnel, reserving for themselves the truly challenging disease problems. Others have attempted to make the ordinary interesting by a complex search for basic biochemical dynamics in the simplest malady. Still others have tried the harder, but more appropriate, route of dealing with the behavioral problems of growth; they are striking out on new paths for which their original training ill-suited them.

To take a second, more striking example of inappropriate solutions: organ transplants (particularly heart transplants) are clearly not the answer to the disease problems which they attack. If all the cardiac surgeons, with an unlimited supply of donors, stood side by side and operated constantly, they could not keep up with the need generated by the amount of arteriosclerotic heart disease of our times. Clearly, the answer must come from preventive medicine, as preventive medicine has answered most of our great health needs in the past. Nonetheless, transplants continue to capture the imagination, to say nothing of the research funds. They have a special attraction, despite their obvious inapplicability to our problems; they allow physicians and patients alike to perpetuate the compact that the real threat lies in acute disease. (In the continuation of artificial organ and transplant research and development, to the virtual exclusion of equivalent efforts in preventive medicine, we are also witnessing a certain technical overshoot that is not unique to medicine. We have come, as a society, to do things simply because we know how to do them, not because they need to be done.)

THERE IS, then, a need for change in the role of the physician. During a period in which the automobile industry has moved from the Model-A Ford to the Mustang, medicine has moved from the horse and buggy to the jet airplane. But while the automobile industry has in the process transformed entire concepts of production, marketing, and transportation, the basic changes that might have been expected in the underlying concepts of the physician's role, therapeutic goals, and the delivery of medical care, have failed to come about.

It has become necessary for physicians to examine what they really do. The trouble is that physicians do not act in a vacuum, but rather in a framework determined by the interlocking complex of man, his society, and his prevalent diseases. Thus, our very notion of cure is itself derived from the threat which infectious disease used to represent. Disease has a start, runs a course, and has an end. Such a view of disease is appropriate to pneumonia or meningitis; it drives physicians to act to terminate the disease, and to define the goals of cure and treatment in terms of the disease, not the man. But infectious diseases have become less common and more easily treated, and we are now presented with more and more diseases which do not fit the familiar patterns—diseases which have social and cultural determinants. To apply the usual criteria of onset, course, and termination is hardly useful in trying to define the proper function of physicians with respect to arteriosclerotic heart disease, stroke, automobile accidents, or some of the biosocial and psychosocial disabilities I discussed earlier. When, after all, does arteriosclerotic heart disease start? Autopsies on soldiers have shown hardening of the coronary arteries even at their young age. And a heart attack, which might appear at first glance to be a disease with a classical history of onset and course, is actually only one adverse episode in the course of an underlying disease, arteriosclerosis.

Because of the extension of medical effectiveness, it has become more important than ever to define what physicians really do, and always have done, apart from their technology. For despite the lack of a basic change in the structure of medicine, there has occurred a basic change in the expectation of patients. People with diseases may now expect to be cured, and their expectation is based on the successes that have been achieved in the treatment of bacterial diseases and the control of disease symptoms. However, although physicians do commonly control such diverse manifestations of disease as vomiting, irregularities of heart rhythm, water retention, tremor, anxiety, depression, inflammation, blood clotting, etc., it would be an error to confuse this control of symptoms with the "cure" of disease.

Physicians comfort, relieve, diagnose, and cure. But threaded through all these things is another process—nonverbal—that is also part of the classic mantle of the physician, whether he knows it or not, and whether he likes it or not. Physicians represent the force of life within us, the force for health and the return to function. Actively or unconsciously—acting with them or against them—they mobilize these forces in patients; in their persons, they represent an almost unfulfillable demand for health. Every culture has its healers, and in every culture they heal. But in every culture, the meaning of disease, health, and function is defined in terms of the culture. The changes in the patterns of disease that have resulted in limitless time for the young have both changed our culture and changed the definition of health and function. They must, therefore, change the function of the "healer" as well.

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Observations

Birds' Heads and Graven Images

Cecil Roth

THE STUDY of what may most conveniently be termed Jewish art (though in some cases it is not Jewish, and in some it is not art), begun only a very short while ago, is now making rapid strides. A substantial bibliography of Jewish art by the late L. A. Mayer appeared a few years back; half a dozen medieval Hebrew illuminated manuscripts have been published in facsimile; and now there has appeared one of the most important and certainly the most perplexing of all—the so called Bird's Head Haggadah of the Bezalel National Art Museum in Jerusalem, edited by M. Spitzer.* This perfectly-reproduced color facsimile is accompanied by an introductory volume with an essay by Meyer Schapiro and contributions by E. D. Goldschmidt on the text, H. L. C. Jaffe on the illustrations, and Bezalel Narkiss on the iconography. With this accumulation of material as well as of incidental illustrations of the subject (including over 50 in black and white in the introductory volume, culled from other sources), it is timely to reconsider the question of Jewish representational art in the Middle Ages, and the quite extraordinary light that is thrown on it by this remarkable publication.

There was a time not so long ago when it was generally held that the over-strict interpretation of one of the Commandments (the Second of them according to the Jewish traditional division, the Third according to the Christian) as well as of other passages of the Pentateuch, meant that representational art of any sort whatsoever was rigorously forbidden to strictly observant Jews. The most telling passage was as a matter of fact not in the Ten Commandments but in the elaboration of this point in Deuteronomy (4:16-18), which forbids in the most uncompromising terms the manufacture of "the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the heaven, the likeness of any thing that creepeth upon the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water under the earth." The implication was of course that such likenesses should not be made for purposes of worship. But the text does not say so; and there can be no doubt that the manufacture of such "images," whether of man, beast, fish, or fowl (let alone the heavenly bodies), was contrary to the express injunction of Mosaic Law. That Moses himself seems to have found a loophole in his own code when he ordered the manufacture of the Cherubim, as did Solomon after him (who added brazen oxen to support the great Temple laver) was beside the point: God knew what he was about.

The matter was quite clear. Strictly Orthodox Jews had nothing to do with images, graven or otherwise, whether of man or beast. When I was a small boy—in the early years of this century—it was accepted that the old restrictions had weakened. Enlightened Jews like us, who had progressed so far as to carry our handkerchiefs on the Sabbath, did not scruple to have our photographs taken. But in the East End (as we in London so quaintly called what was known in New York as the East Side) there were still old-type Jews who refused such indulgence; and even in our own circle, some pretentious art-connoisseurs made sure that the sculptures they owned were somewhat mutilated so that they would not present a perfect image. (It is hardly necessary to say that this was before the days of modern art, in which such precaution is superfluous.)

As A corollary it was universally accepted that in antiquity, when all Jews were Orthodox, they would have had nothing to do with representational art. I well recall the occasion when a Jewish academic friend of mine in Florence attempted to dissuade me from buying what appeared to me to be (as it was) the back of a Hannukah lamp of the Renaissance period, showing Judith bearing the head of Holophernes. At that time, he said, no Jew would have been guilty of such a strident breach of biblical precept, least of all for a religious object. The general impression regarding this was heightened by the fact so clearly established by Josephus (who is generally reliable except when his own interests are involved, when he displays himself like so many of us as an arch-prevaricator) that in his own day, in the first century of the Christian era, the Jews of Palestine would go to any extreme, even at the risk of their lives, to exclude from Jerusalem the graven images which their Roman masters desired to introduce—not only for purposes of worship. On the other hand, we have evidence, both literary and archaeological, which suggests the contrary. (I do not wish to enter here into any details, which may be found readily now in various standard books.)

The reason for the contradiction does not seem to me to be very difficult to find. On the one hand, there was in this matter throughout history a certain ebb and flow: at times the Jews did in fact oppose fiercely all manner of

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* Tarshish Books, Jerusalem.

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images, at times their opposition weakened. They were influenced by imitation on the one hand, by revulsion on the other. Sometimes, when their relations with their neighbors were tolerably friendly and there was no fear that the purity of Jewish worship would be sullied, the Jews followed to some extent the aesthetic standards and practices of their environment in matters of representational art, with certain reservations. Other times, when relations were strained, and the religious pressure of the environment was strongly felt, there was a period of revulsion, and the biblical precepts were stringently enforced. And I must admit that I have the impression that in the period of Roman domination, at the close of the period of the Second Temple, another factor came into play besides piety—contrariness: rather like the contrariness of Palestinian Jewish leaders of nineteen centuries after who did not mind driving to the coast for a swim on the Sabbath, but raised expressions of pained religious indignation when the British authorities dared to drive them off in police vans on the day of rest. Their remote ancestors perhaps did not mind what ornaments they might have at home, whether or not Moses would have approved, but their religious susceptibilities became strangely sensitive when the foreign oppressor did precisely the same.

However this may be, we now know that at a somewhat later period of classical antiquity the anti-iconic (i.e., anti-image) principle dwindled or disappeared among the Jews: not only as regards secular but also as regards religious purposes. The first solid evidence of this that emerged was the mosaic floor of the 6th-century synagogue at Beth Alpha in Galilee which depicts, among other things, pretty awkwardly it is true, the sacrifice of Isaac (as well as, incidentally, the Four Seasons and the Chariot of the Sun, driven by what looks very much like Apollo). It is fairly certain in the light of subsequent discoveries that something similar, centering on some biblical episode or the other, was a normal decorative feature of the Palestinian synagogues of the period. What makes this most remarkable is that such floor-decoration falls quite clearly in the category of "a stone of gazing to prostrate oneself thereon" which is expressly envisaged by the Mosaic prohibition (Leviticus 26:1).

Subsequent to this was the amazing discovery of the 3rd-century synagogue at Dura Europos on the Euphrates, its walls (still standing in some cases to the original height) covered with frescoes depicting scenes of Bible history. There does not seem to be much doubt that this was a usual feature in synagogues of the period, probably in Europe as well as in Asia: the frescoes preserved in some of the Roman catacombs are incidental proofs of this practice. Moreover, it appears that four-dimensional as well as two-dimensional art was sometimes present—that is, "graven images" in the full biblical sense of the term. There is evidence of this in some of the carved decorative features which adorn the limestone walls of certain of the ancient synagogues of the classical period in Galilee, as well as in stone sarcophagi both in Palestine and Italy. A statue of the ruler stood in one of the fashionable Babylonian synagogues frequented by the most pious and learned of the Jewish scholars of the period: since they were on friendly terms with and well treated by the government, nobody minded much, whereas in 1st-century Palestine a parallel attempt nearly led to armed insurrection on the part of the indignant patriots.

Of course, in the religious codes both of the period and later one can find stringent prohibitions of plastic art which would tend to confirm the prevalent view that Judaism sternly suppressed representational art. I have been asked by lecture audiences how in view of this it was possible that art could have emerged among the Jews. My normal reply is somewhat facetious: the codes also forbid conversation during the synagogue service, but it is a matter of normal observation that nevertheless such conversation does take place. Or to be more academic: the codes forbid the interruption of the basic sections of the synagogue service by the insertion of hymns, but in the Ashkenazi service in particular on certain occasions such hymns at the most solemn moments have become the distinctive feature of the liturgy. Rather than establishing a rule of conduct, historians inform us, medieval legislation sets down an ideal; in certain respects the same is true of the medieval Jewish religious codes.

If representational art existed in the synagogue of the classical period, there was no reason at all why there should not have been representational art in the home as well—both for domestic purposes and for para-religious use—and its existence may be taken as certain. Hence it may logically be deduced from the existence of the synagogue frescoes illustrating the Bible, such as those that have been preserved in Dura Europos, that there were also decorated or illuminated manuscripts of the Bible (though this did not of course apply to the Torah Scrolls used in public services). Indeed, some scholars believe that the Dura frescoes are, in origin as it were, manuscript illuminations transferred from the Book to the walls of the place of worship. Certain of the oldest Graeco-Latin illuminated Bible texts are believed to be based on these Jewish prototypes, or even perhaps to have been made in the first instance for Jewish use. Thus, the existence of illuminated manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible in the classical period hardly seems to be in question, though none has been preserved.

What happened afterward is a matter of discussion. It is clear that in the immediate post-classical period there was in certain areas a revulsion against this pictorial art. This was due in part to the iconoclastic movement in Byzantium, in part to the rise of Islam with its pronounced iconophobic tendencies: for obviously, the Jews—the classical opponents of iconolatry—could not permit themselves to be outdone by their parvenu neighbors. Hence, the first illuminated Hebrew manuscripts (in fact, Bible manuscripts) now extant, dating to about the year 1,000, are not illuminated in the fully ac-

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cepted sense (i.e. illustrated with scenes from the scriptural story) but decorated—sometimes very elaborately and very beautifully indeed, ocassionally with remarkable anticipations of abstract art. These decorations, moreover, do not contain any representation of man or beast and they generally are not incorporated into the text, but figure on a series of superb preliminary pages. This tradition of non-representational illumination continued in the Middle East, and thereafter in Islamic or Islamized Spain, for many years; its traces can be discerned in some areas even at the time of the invention of printing, after which the tradition of manuscript art declined.

Outside the Islamic world, Hebrew illuminated manuscripts begin to emerge, so far as extant evidence is concerned, a good deal later, that is, around the mid-13th century, and in the first instance in the Franco-German orbit. But these are of a different type, closer to what we today consider illuminated manuscripts: that is, they include representations of scenes (generally biblical scenes) embodying without scruple human forms and faces. Nor is the subject matter confined to the Bible codices, as in the Orient, but extends also to legal texts and liturgical works —especially the ever-popular domestic service for the Passover eve, the Haggadah. (In due course, this usage became hesitantly established in Spain and Italy, but this is beyond our present scope.) It is noteworthy that this was in the Franco-German orbit—that is, in an area in which, unlike the world of Byzantium or the world of Islam, representational art was freely accepted in the outside world: as the Christian does, so does the Jew, a Yiddish proverb acutely observes. To be sure, there was discussion among the rabbis as to whether such illuminations or representations were compatible with Jewish religious principles. Probably the consensus was against, but this is beside the point: we are dealing here with the fact, and not the theory.

I have said above that we have evidence for these fully-illuminated manuscripts in northern Europe around the mid-13th century. This does not mean, however, that the practice of illuminating Hebrew manuscripts began then. The earliest now extant display a finished craftsmanship which suggests a long anterior tradition; and it must be borne in mind that the vicissitudes of Jewish history resulted in a vast destruction of books of all types, so that a great body of evidence has disappeared. Hence we are left with the fascinating problem: did the European Jewish illuminated manuscript represent an innovation, which began under the influence of the environment sometime before the 13th century, or was this a continuation of the tradition of illuminated manuscripts which, as we have seen, must have been prevalent in the classical period, and though interrupted in the Orient by the rise of iconophobic tendencies, was perpetuated nevertheless in the more favorable atmosphere of the Occident?

If one accepts the latter view, the absence of documentation can be explained simply by assuming the documentation has disappeared. In Jewish cultural history, this is one of the most perplexing and most exciting of the problems at present under discussion among the two or three of us who are interested in it. (Art has not yet taken its place among the disciplines of the major *yeshivot* and kindred bodies.)

The Bird's Head Haggadah, the original of which is one of the treasures of the Bezalel National Art Museum in Jerusalem, now comes to help to solve (or is it further to confuse?) the problem. It is an illuminated Haggadah of the classical Ashkenazi (or Franco-German) type—that is, the illuminations accompany the text in a sort of running pictorial commentary in the ample margins of the page, in the style of contemporary German folk-art. From internal evidence, it seems probable that the manuscript was executed around the year 1300, in which case it may be the oldest illuminated Haggadah in existence, with the questionable exception of one of Carolingian type in the fabulous John Rylands Library in Manchester. In his acute analysis of the subject matter of the illuminations, Bezalel Narkiss (son of Mordecai Narkiss, who has the credit for discovering this manuscript some twenty years ago, as well as for giving it the name by which it is generally known) shows that in all probability the illustrations are based on an established tradition: that is, this manuscript of c. 1300 is evidence for the existence of analogous manuscripts of a hundred or two hundred years before—or even earlier still. These are not necessarily manuscripts of the text of the Haggadah, but possibly cycles of Bible illuminations (which conceivably might link up with the hypothetical illuminated Bible manuscripts of the classical period, as well as with contemporary Spanish productions).

The central point of interest in this manuscript is however the illustrations to which it owes its name. All or almost all the human faces are distorted, most of them having bird-like faces, with the mouth and nose combined so that they resemble grotesque oversized eagle's beaks. Some of the figures, on the other hand, have short, pointed animal ears, while in a few cases servitors are endowed with huge bulbous noses over the suspicion of a mouth. In some instances outlines of human faces can be discerned, usually half-concealed by helmets and visors. Close inspection, however, shows that these crudely delineated features were added later, so that the full human face probably never figured originally. On the other hand, it is noteworthy that these approaches to the human semblance occur only in the case of the angels, who were super-human, or of the pursuing Egyptians, who were from this point of view sub-human: the birds' heads are reserved for the Israelites. (There seems to be an exception to this in the scene showing the pursuit of the Israelites at the Red Sea, where a bird's-headed mace-bearer seems to be stalking Pharaoh, and a bird's-headed postilion drives the enemy chariot. I am convinced, however, that these are intended

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to represent Israelite or angelic fifth columnists.)

The sublime grotesqueness of the figures is enhanced by the fact that most of the more important bird's-headed figures—the leaders and the teachers—are shown wearing the traditional yellow Jewish pointed hat, the so-called *pileum cornutum*. (Yet the rank and file of the redeemed Israelites seem to be bare-headed: official Orthodoxy please note!) We have thus the delightful scene of a bird's-headed Moses with his yellow peaked hat handing down the law at Sinai to bird's-headed Joshua and the elders and so on down to the bird's-headed Israelite who is forcibly preventing his cattle from straying onto the sacred mountain. It must be observed that the Bird's Head Haggadah is not the only Hebrew manuscript in which this device is used—the introductory volume provides several other instances—but it is the most important and the most consistent and presumably the earliest of the group.

Why birds' heads? Possibly because of the association of the Israelites with the eagle's fledglings in the Bible, or with the significance of the protection of the Imperial eagle to medieval Jews, as suggested by Meyer Schapiro in his essay; possibly because of the legend which gives ethereal, otherworldly qualities to the Hebrews, as proposed by Zofia Ameisonowa in her suggestively-titled monograph, "Animal-headed Gods, Evangelists, Saints and Righteous Men," published some time ago. This is a problem which invites further study. But what is beyond question is that the use of birds' heads instead of human faces in this remarkable manuscript is the result of an attempt to avoid the delineation of the human face (although retaining the human form), in obedience to biblical precept and in deference to the views of some of the stricter rabbinical authorities of the age.

IN ANY CASE, this is a transitional stage, between inhibitions and uninhibitions; between the restricted illuminated manuscript reflecting the traditional hesitancies, and the fully illuminated manuscript in the normally accepted sense. But one problem remains: is the point of transit in the transitional Bird's Head Haggadah on the way *there* or on the way *back*? I mean, is it a timid advance on the way from the inconophobic to the iconopathic stage, or does it mark a recession from a fully-developed iconopathic manuscript art back to a semi-iconophobic one, in deference to Orthodox opinion? Or to put it less polysyllabically: were there no illuminated Hebrew manuscripts before the prototype of the Bird's Head Haggadah and the analogous works, so that even this restricted form of illumination represents a daring advance, or were illuminated Hebrew manuscripts known in Europe and the Western world long, long before this, the Bird's Head Haggadah marking a recession due to local rabbinical pressures? This is the next problem which will have to be discussed.

One thing has nevertheless become clear as a result of recent investigation: whatever the state of mind that produced the Bird's Head Haggadah, before long the illuminated Hebrew manuscript became a commonplace in Europe. Such manuscripts were illuminated in the fullest sense, and sometimes of truly high artistic quality, which can hardly be said of this codex, its naive appeal notwithstanding.

Even so, there was of course one artistic inhibition which, by common consent, the Jewish artist would not infringe. He did not object to representational art, notwithstanding the Ten Commandments, for he realized that the prohibition in the Ten Commandments envisaged representation of the Deity, which was very properly forbidden. Hence, even after the "rediscovery" of medieval Jewish art, there was common agreement among the vast majority of scholars that the Jewish artist of the Middle Ages would at all events not venture to represent the incorporeal Deity: here was the dividing line between Jewish and non-Jewish art. But, as investigations proceeded, it became clear that even this generalization was not true. A remote delineation of God is shown in the engraving of the Vision of Ezekiel on the title page of a Hebrew Bible printed at Mantua in 1742. A rabbinic work published at Frankfort on the Oder in 1698 shows Him benignly presiding over the ascending and descending angels of Jacob's dream. He is depicted assisting in accomplishing the works of creation in the engraved border of an Italian marriage contract of the mid-17th century. We see Him similarly engaged in the engraved title-page of a ritual code printed in Augsburg in 1540—true, in this case, under Gentile auspices. He is even shown sculptured in relief (and this was by common consent a less permissible form of art for Jews) on an Amsterdam tombstone of 1717. There is even some evidence for the acceptance in some German communities of a God-figure in the round in the Eternal Light which hung before the Ark in the synagogue. Pious Jews of the ghetto period thus tolerated in certain circumstances deviations from the accepted standard at which (very properly in the view of the present writer) the most advanced Reform Temple of today would boggle.

ENOUGH has been said to demonstrate finally the inadequacy of the accepted views regarding the anti-iconic, or iconophobic, tendencies of traditional Judaism. Such inhibitions did exist in certain areas and at certain times (for example, in Eastern Europe a short while ago). But in other areas and at other times there was a complete freedom of approach, freer in some respects than some of us would admit today. The Bird's Head Haggadah, now made available to the general public, is a remarkable and highly suggestive link in this chain.

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CHEMICAL WARFARE: A STUDY IN RESTRAINTS. By FREDERIC J. BROWN. *Princeton University Press. 355 pp. $9.00.*

Reviewed by SHELDON NOVICK

THE UNITED STATES, its enemies, and its allies are arming themselves with poison gases and disease germs for use in warfare. Chemical warfare agents—crop poisons, nerve gases, other poisonous gases, and incapacitating gases—are in extensive development and production in the United States, and biological weapons preparations are going forward. These are the clear, repugnant facts discussed in these books.

Chemical warfare agents are being used, for the first time since World War I, in Vietnam. Crop-destruction with arsenic-based herbicides, defoliation, destruction of much of the mangrove forests of South Vietnam, repeated spraying of vast areas with the persistent herbicide picloram, and experimentation with toxic gases, are providing much operational experience in the arts of chemical warfare. Nerve gases are in standard and steady production in this country, and our stockpile of nerve-gas bombs, missiles, and artillery shells can only be compared with our stockpile of nuclear weapons for sheer useless destructiveness. Chemical weapons are dispersed throughout the world with United States forces, and it is not at all clear under what circumstances we are prepared to use them.

The Russians are not behind us in this field, as the Israeli army revealed when it found unused nerve-gas artillery, Russian made, in Sinai. In Yemen, the Egyptians have used poison-gas bombs.

Our own nerve-gas weapons are manufactured at a plant in Newport, Indiana, by the Food Machinery and Chemical Corporation of New York City. The vast surplus of nerve gas had been stored at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal until recently, when a group of scientists in nearby Denver pointed out that the gas was directly beneath a main approach of the Denver airport. The bulk of the arsenal has now been moved on flatbed railroad cars to Utah, where chemical warfare experiments are carried on over large areas of the state.

At the Dugway Proving Grounds in Utah, where new chemical agents are tested, a recent experiment involved spraying nerve gas from a jet aircraft at low altitude. Through a series of gross misjudgments, and the mechanical failure of the spray cut-off mechanism, the gas drifted several miles from the test area, and killed thousands of sheep. A recent article in *Environment* magazine points out it was only good luck which spared the town of Dugway in this incident.

THE MOST recent and most scholarly review of these activities is *CBW: Chemical and Biological Warfare,* the record of a conference held in London, February 22 and 23, 1968. The proceedings have been ably edited by Steven Rose, who has added material and made revisions to take account of later developments.

Although much of the material has been published before, there is also much that is new. The reader will be surprised to find that the United States is making use of the Canadian Suffield Proving Grounds, where a thousand-square-mile tract is used "for studying the spread of [disease] organisms," as he will be to learn the extent of United States use of toxic gases in Vietnam. The book deals with the legal and moral aspects of research as well as with the nature, development, and use of the weapons themselves; and, though the exposition is sometimes inadequate, the references and bibliography are copious. This volume is likely to serve, as apparently it was intended, as the handbook for academic opposition to CBW.

SEYMOUR HERSH'S *Chemical and Biological Warfare* is intended for a broader audience. It is a compelling description of the grossly misconceived programs which have elicited passionate opposition from independent scientists. Hersh provides some information on the state of our biological warfare development, a more secret enterprise, and his most disturbing reportage concerns the testing of biological weapons.

Most of America's germ warfare research is conducted at Fort Detrick, near Frederick, Maryland. It would be difficult to list in the short space of a review all the disturbing features of this program. Hersh effectively demolishes the persistent claim that the research is defensive in nature, pointing to the heavy preponderance of work on delivery mechanisms. A biological warfare missile warhead, he reports, has been operational since 1964. There is extensive experimentation with human subjects at Detrick, and diseases like pneumonic plague and anthrax escape from the base with disturbing regularity. Local and federal health agencies seem to have assisted Fort Detrick in keeping these incidents from public attention.

The overwhelming impression one carries away from Hersh's book, a fine piece of writing and investigative reporting from start to finish, is of the incompetence with which chemical and biological warfare agents are handled. Hersh quotes a letter from a chemist who worked at Dugway Proving Grounds, where chemical and per-

SHELDON NOVICK'S The Careless Atom *has recently been published. Mr. Novick is the editor of* Environment *magazine.*

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haps biological agents are field-tested:

> The civilians, whether Ph.D.'s or not, were a strange breed of people. . . . They all had credentials, degrees, etc., but from the time they arrived at Dugway they just turned off. It was another world, ostensibly a scientific testing operation but in reality a home for derelicts of all kinds: people who could not cope with . . . a real life situation. . . .
>
> I cannot speak for the veracity of other tests conducted at Dugway, but there were certainly a number of cooked-up results submitted by our group. . . . Very often we "dry-labbed" it [gave them the result they wanted] or else the section heads would.
>
> It took no idiot to figure out that the more tests there were the more people would be needed and this was exactly the way most of our superiors could improve their position.

ROBIN CLARKE'S *The Silent Weapons* is a review of the available published material regarding CBW. Clarke, editor of the British *Science Journal*, has attempted simply to make this material accessible to the lay reader, and has succeeded, though the book is marred by a lack of documentation. "The public knows far more about the mechanisms of the hydrogen bomb, the extent of the nation's nuclear stockpiles, and the methods of delivering nuclear warheads than . . . about the technology of chemical warfare," Clarke quite rightly points out. He dispels some of the secrecy which surrounds both chemical and biological weapons, but he never really analyzes the reasons for their existence.

It is hard to evade the conclusion that to some extent CBW secrecy protects useless and dangerous programs and their sponsors from outside criticism. By carefully reviewing the literature of biological warfare, Clarke presents what is probably the consensus among knowledgeable scientists: that biological warfare currently should hold no practical interest for the United States. Furthermore, experimentation with biological agents is extremely hazardous, particularly when it involves field-testing of infectious agents. The prospect of a repeat of the Dugway nerve-gas fiasco, this time with plague or anthrax germs, is not appealing. Surprisingly, Clarke seems to resist the implication in his evidence that biological warfare research is a vastly dangerous boondoggle, protected by secrecy and the aura of modern science. He presents the inherent problems in the way those engaged in the programs view them—as difficulties to be overcome by research. But the real problems are in the very nature of the beast.

To begin with, highly infectious diseases, transmissible from man to man, are extremely undesirable weapons because of the impossibility of foreseeing or controlling the extent of their spread once they have been released. A worldwide pandemic of some newly infectious plague might very well follow the use of such an agent in warfare. Even if it were possible to innoculate one's own civilian population in advance, there would still be very great risks. As we are constantly being reminded by the new varieties of flu which appear each year, infectious diseases have a way of mutating to new forms against which our old vaccines are useless. Finally, and perhaps equally as important from the standpoint of military effectiveness, are the problems of delayed effects and the inevitable unpredictability of agents which depend for their effect on being spread from man to man.

From the military's point of view, then, the biological weapons of choice would seem to be diseases which, though highly virulent, and to which there is little natural immunity among human populations, are yet not transmitted from person to person. In addition, an effective treatment must be available to protect oneself against retaliations and miscarriages of one's own weapons.

Such a disease agent (tularemia is one of the few known to fit these specifications) would be little different from any number of highly effective poisons already in our chemical warfare arsenal. Acting only after inhalation or ingestion, it would affect only those with whom it came into direct con-

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tact. Biological agents, in fact, are quickly merging into chemical agents, and the most potent BW weapon now known is in reality a chemical, botulinum toxin. This is one of the most toxic materials known, and is secreted by the germ *Clostridium botulinum*—hence its classification as a biological agent. A fraction of a millionth of a gram of this material can be lethal. (There are other chemical agents, among them the newer nerve gases developed by the British, such as VX, which may approach this enormous toxicity.)

Yet it is hard to see what advantage the biological agents, if militarily suitable ones could be developed, would have over chemicals. In terms of weight of material required to produce a single casualty, it is unlikely that bacterial agents will ever be as efficient as chemical weapons, since just a few bacteria may weigh as much as a lethal dose of VX. Both bacteria and viruses are easily destroyed by even brief exposure to air and sunlight, and though viruses might have some weight advantage, the difficulties of delivering them would probably offset this nominal advantage.

DESPITE THESE inherent difficulties, research in biological warfare continues on a large scale. The best that could be expected from such research would be a new weapon system substantially similar to chemical weapons already in our arsenal. The cost of such research is the constant risk of inadvertent release of infectious diseases during field-testing or laboratory experimentation. The greatest danger in allowing it to continue is the risk that an infectious, easily transmissible disease agent will be developed, stockpiled, and eventually used, through no better reason than bureaucratic inertia, and that the result will be a massive epidemic out of all control.

Clarke is as dedicated an opponent of chemical and biological weapons as one can find, and he presents much of the evidence needed to construct a reasonable argument against their development, but his own appeal to scientists to cease assisting in the de-

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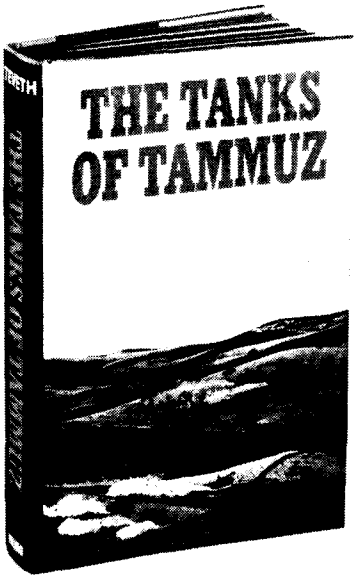

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velopment of such weapons is somewhat less than persuasive. I do not know why he thinks that scientists are more likely to respond to appeals of a humanitarian sort than are, say, generals. Indeed, as Clarke points out earlier in his book, scientists historically have been the principal advocates of chemical and biological warfare agents (on the presumably humanitarian grounds that they merely maim, wound, or incapacitate their victims) whereas generals have been the chief obstacles to their employment.

FREDERIC J. BROWN documents this last point in detail and with great authority in *Chemical Warfare: A Study in Restraints.* According to the book jacket, Major Brown is assistant professor of International Relations at West Point. In his introduction he notes that he has had "direct access to all United States toxic-agent policy documents," with the exceptions of Joint Chiefs of Staff minutes and White House documents. He has apparently been hampered by secrecy much less than the other three authors reviewed here, and his book therefore has a special interest.

It is a scholarly work, written in the cool tone that now seems required for academic discussions of warfare. With persuasive thoroughness, Brown explores the history of chemical weapons since World War I. His aim is to answer the question: "Why did the United States not use chemical weapons in the Second World War?" He focuses on the end of the war with Japan, when there were seemingly few restraints on the means we were willing to employ—when fire-bombing and nuclear weapons were used, and when there was no apparent threat of retaliation.

The interesting and well-documented conclusion is that the restraints on the use of chemical weapons in World War II operated in the military, not in the political sphere: it was the generals and not the politicians who opposed their use. In the author's words: "In World War II, the lesson was clear; the loci of decision-making with respect to gas warfare lay within the professional military establishments themselves. Military lack of interest kept the issue of initiation from reaching civilian elite groups."

WHY WAS the military uninterested in chemical agents? "Neither public opinion nor legal restriction was directly effective; but, on the other hand, lack of assimilation and fear of retaliation proved to be significant restraints." "Lack of assimilation" is Brown's phrase for two related phenomena: first, the reluctance of the professional military establishment to absorb innovation, particularly the drastic innovations which the experience of World War I had shown would be required for defensive as well as offensive chemical warfare; and second, the pervasive feeling that chemical agents were simply not honorable or acceptable means of warfare.

Brown investigates the implications of this analysis for our modern theories, if that is the word, of nuclear deterrence. Chemical weapons, like nuclear weapons, were used briefly and then subjected to elaborate restraints, internally and internationally. Would these restraints be effective in the case of nuclear weapons? Is our national reliance on nuclear deterrence justified? The author concludes: "The record of the United States chemical warfare policy provides a little solace to anyone concerned with the evolution of deterrence, but it is precious little." He points out that the professional military has accepted nuclear weapons to a far greater degree than they ever accepted chemical weapons, at least when they think in terms of massive warfare between the USSR or China and the U.S.

This greater acceptance is probably a reflection of general public opinion, for although Brown discounts public opinion and political pressure as a *direct* restraint on the use of chemical weapons, he leads one to the conclusion that as an indirect force the general climate of opinion has in fact been decisive. The distaste for chemical warfare felt by the military was a reflection, in large part, of prevailing public sentiment, just as the current dependence of some of our armed forces on nuclear missiles

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seems to be simply a part of a national acceptance of the supposed necessity of these weapons. (There are some indications that even in this regard public feeling has changed or is changing. The test-ban treaty, the pressure for a nonproliferation treaty, and the first faint glimmerings of hope for arms-limitation agreements with the Soviet Union are encouraging.)

Chemical weapons of mass destruction are morally repellent; piled upon the equally redundant nuclear arms system upon which we now base our strategies they add nothing to our national security. A biological warfare system, if it could be developed, would simply add a third horror to our lives, and would bring with it a whole new category of global risks.

Two Germans

A PEACE POLICY FOR EUROPE. By WILLY BRANDT. Translated by Joel Carmichael. *Holt, Rinehart & Winston. 225 pp. $5.95.*

HERAUSFORDERUNG UND ANTWORT—EIN PROGRAMM FUR EUROPA (Challenge and Response—A Program for Europe). By FRANZ JOSEF STRAUSS. Foreword by Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber. *Seewald Verlag, Stuttgart. 205 pp.*

Reviewed by VIOLA HERMS DRATH

WITH ELECTIONS in Germany approaching this fall, books are blossoming forth by prominent politicians who regard themselves as candidates for the chancellor's chair, currently occupied by Kurt Georg Kiesinger. Two notable examples are *A Peace Policy for Europe* by Willy Brandt, Germany's vice-chancellor, foreign minister, and chairman of the Social Democratic party, and *Challenge and Response—A Program for Europe* by Franz Josef Strauss, finance minister and head of the Christian Social Union.

Nobody in his right mind would think of putting these two leaders, representing the left- and right-wing factions of the Grand Coalition, in the same political pot. Yet it is surprising in how many respects the liberal, Kennedy-quoting, ex-mayor of West Berlin and the conservative ex-defense minister, remembered for the *Der Spiegel* incident, appear to agree on key issues. To be sure, they differ greatly in the means they employ and the reasons they advance for achieving similar goals. Nevertheless, together they lend credence to the charge leveled by a meager opposition, and by intellectuals and students, that the Establishment's foreign policy lacks alternatives.

Brandt and Strauss both emphasize that a good German is also a good European, a thesis that grows out of the fear of being tagged nationalistic. As Strauss puts it, "In order to remain Germans, we must become Europeans." Both leaders are unhappy with the congealed European status quo. Brandt terms the present peace insecure,

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and calls for a new "peace order" for Europe. Strauss also warns that Germans are no longer willing to accept the status quo, but where Brandt modestly complains about the unresolved question of German self-determination, Strauss boldly asks for a voice in creating and shaping world politics. Germany, he writes, cannot forever remain an economic giant (it is second in world trade) and a political dwarf.

Both politicians have the reunification of Germany on their minds. In view of the American engagement at home and in Asia, and the "ambivalence of American politics—its vacillation between deterrent and detente" (Strauss), both have concluded that it is up to the Europeans, and especially to divided Germany, to solve the problems of Europe. Instead of the concept of the 50's, which aimed at the political integration of Western Europe within the framework of the Atlantic Alliance, they envision a strengthening of existing relations among the six Common Market nations—such as the Coal and Steel Community, the European Economic Community, Euratom, and the Franco-German friendship treaty—into solid political, economic, social, technological, and, in the case of Strauss, military ties. The ultimate goal is the creation of a Europe that speaks with a single voice. Both Strauss's European federation and Brandt's peace order are directed to this end.

The authors, however, evade and gloss over the heart of the problem—Germany itself—by holding that the division of Germany can be dealt with only by curing the division of Europe, toward which end each of them offers his own somewhat utopian designs.

Brandt visualizes a long-range policy of tension-easing rapprochement. He is convinced that a conscious cooperative effort of peaceful coexistence is bound to grow in strength over the years and loosen up the rigid power blocs. As a foundation for his European peace order he proposes a collective security system that vaguely resembles certain Soviet proposals. In order to reduce the perilous military confrontation in Europe, such a security system would include not only NATO and the Warsaw Pact nations but the United States and the Soviet Union as well.

The improvement and normalization of East-West relations, the development of mutual trust and confidence, along with measures for arms limitations and balanced disarmament, to be followed by renunciation of force, are all essential items in the complex catalog of the Foreign Minister's program. In view of the obstacles so far put up by Bonn, it is heartening to learn that Brandt considers the nuclear nonproliferation and test-ban treaties as valuable milestones on the painfully long road to reconciliation.

IT IS at this point that Brandt and Strauss part company. Strauss, by nature a suspicious man, likes to imagine a plot against the Federal Republic whenever the superpowers schedule a conference, and he profoundly distrusts political concepts involving good will and faith. Always an outspoken opponent of the nonproliferation treaty—he interprets the possession of nuclear weapons, as well as the power to dispose of them, as a symbol of sovereignty—he plans to reorganize NATO into a West European defense community which would gradually develop its own nuclear weapons system while simultaneously maintaining a cooperative partnership with the United States. A strong, independent "union of free European countries," he argues, can be expected to have an enormous magnetism and fascination for the Eastern Bloc countries. It could be counted on to attract them till their "national striving for self-determination flows into the wish for a political unity of all of Europe."

Equally aware as is Strauss of the problem of American economic and technological influence in Europe, Brandt is less alarmed about it, and points to a growing European independence and self-awareness. Yet he recognizes the population explosion and the scientific revolution as the two great moving forces of our time and submits that the magnitude of modern technology transcends the powers of individual European states. Europe has fallen back and must catch up: "In disunion our continent would sink still further, but in cooperation it will have a great deal to offer mankind."

Strauss, always the astute politician, takes no such philosophical view. One of his critics has said of him that he is the only politician who knows how to instill dissatisfaction in the prosperous Germans. Inspired by Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber's *The American Challenge*, he sounds the alarm button and tells the other members of the European community that they are dwarfs. "Our continent threatens—politically and economically—to degenerate into an underdeveloped territory," he states dramatically. Only when Europeans make up their minds to unify their countries can self-determination prevail. Otherwise, he warns, their lot will be, at best, a modest right of co-decision.

The "Europeanization of the German question," as Strauss calls it, is not a new idea. For many years he has stressed that the demand of the Germans for unification, if it is to be met, will have to become the responsibility of the West European community as a whole. But in the technological gap Strauss has found the ingredient of urgency missing from his earlier military-oriented solution to the German question. Now, skillfully blending the two elements, he suggests a response to the fact of American superiority in the fields of space technology, computer and airplane building, electronics, and management, that is a pragmatic compound of European cooperation, fusion, and integration.

ALTHOUGH both party leaders favor the continued friendship and protection of the United States, they also express interest in a dialogue with Moscow. Brandt believes that the "Soviet Union does not wish to speak of German unity for the time being," but is possibly ready to discuss peace in Europe, and he is prompted to lay the groundwork for such discussions. "Our policy with respect to Eastern Europe," he emphasizes, "cannot be separated from the shaping of our re-

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lationship to the Soviet Union." With considerable pride the Foreign Minister describes the accomplishments of his Social Democratic party, which was the first to initiate an effective open policy toward Eastern Europe. As a result, after establishing diplomatic relations with Rumania, the *Bundesrepublik* now "figures" in all Eastern European countries, except Albania. Unfortunately, Brandt sheds little light on events in Czechoslovakia—the "Prague Spring," forcibly reversed by the intervention of Soviet troops—for which the German embrace could well have been partly responsible.

Strauss is less squeamish. "The overexaggerated manifestation of the West for a detente at any price has made easier the decision of intervention on August 21, 1968 by the Soviets," he charges. As a result, the Soviets have been deluded into thinking of themselves as the greatest force in Europe, and no longer present any hope for a policy of detente, Strauss believes. He assures us that when *he* talks to Moscow, it will be from a position of economic as well as military strength. Coexistence and rapprochement, furthermore, in Strauss's opinion, merely serve the purpose of obstructing the formation of a powerful European community, and: "In reality the consequences of a bipolar East-West detente amount to a weakening of the free world."

Both politicians stand firm on non-recognition of the East German Democratic Republic, which Strauss refers to as the Soviet Zone, and the Oder-Neisse line. Even though the Soviet Union, Poland, and East Germany have repeatedly explained that they regard agreements on those issues as a precondition to talks on the German question, neither Brandt nor Strauss is willing to discuss them. It is Brandt's opinion that recognition of the German Democratic Republic as a "foreign country" would only cement the de facto split, while any decision on the Oder-Neisse line must be left up to an all-German government when a peace settlement is concluded.

The difference between Strauss and Brandt comes down to one of

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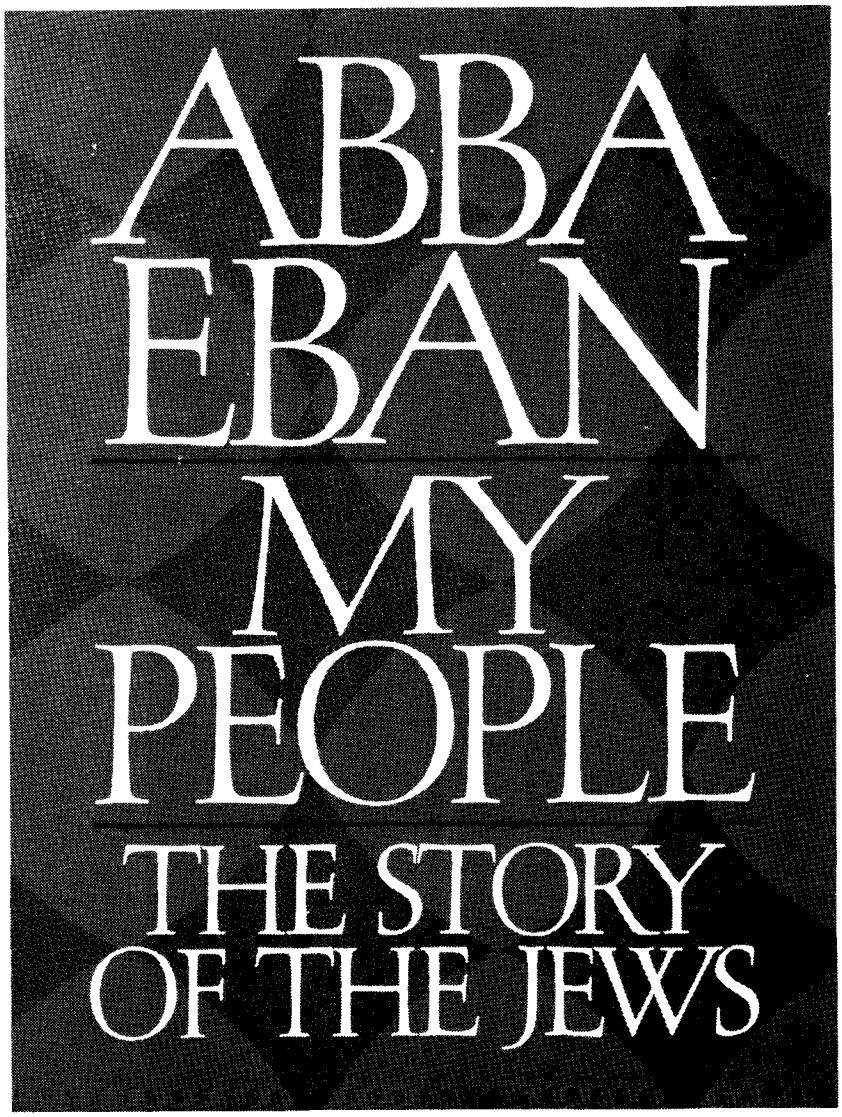

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attitude: Strauss is the skeptic, Brandt the optimist. Yet it is interesting to see how Brandt's nonmilitary approach to European integration, which at first glance seems the more utopian, appears to be the more possible after an analysis of Strauss's *Realpolitik*.

Strauss chooses to ignore the truth in de Gaulle's remark that there is not one European nation but many, and presumes that the political decisions necessary to his program will be approved by the European peoples just as if they were already the homogeneous unit he would have them become. Yet even in Eastern Europe, for decades held together by a tight uniformity of ideology, such homogeneity has not developed. Does Strauss seriously believe that France, Italy, or England, who maintain excellent relations with the Soviet Union, the Eastern Bloc countries, and Red China, would be remotely interested in the type of defense community he proposes, especially when the German Federal Republic, whose division inherently presents a highly explosive situation, is dissatisfied with the status quo? Strauss is disenchanted with NATO. But there is no guarantee that a European defense community, which will no more represent the will of *one* people than does NATO, would not also be plagued by troublesome considerations of priorities. The unhappy fact is that certain sectors of vital national interest, such as defense, food, and energy, are indivisible and therefore cannot be decided by a supranational authority as long as the homogeneity of its participating nations remains undeveloped.

In the past Strauss's concept of a united Western Europe, based primarily on a European defense community, has been received with a marked absence of enthusiasm, especially outside of Germany. It is doubtful whether his addition of the technological gap as another argument for unification will increase its popularity or erase the suspicion that the idea merely disguises a plan for German reunification and a more powerful German position.

In his foreword to *Challenge and Response,* Servan-Schreiber does not minimize the dangers in Strauss's power politics, but he sanctions them on the chance that they may accomplish the desired end. However, neither Servan-Schreiber, Strauss, nor Brandt takes cognizance of the fact that quite spontaneously an integrated European community is already under way and growing. In the absence of special treaties or pacts, students, artists, film makers, scholars, and others have been creating their own united Europe. It would appear that these already existing forces could be made a significant element in building a United States of Europe; they require, however, an alert and imaginative leadership, one not obsessed by power politics, defense systems, ideologies, and recognition of East Germany or the Oder-Neisse line.

Compared with the obstacles the Strauss plan presents, Brandt's grand design for bringing together East and West by means of friendship and mutual trust seems to stand a better chance for survival in this day and age, notwithstanding setbacks such as Czechoslovakia. "Today, Communism," Brandt writes, "even in its own realm, is anything but a strictly hierarchized and undisputed world religion. It has been transformed, and it will be transformed still further. Transformation happens to be the destiny of systems in this age of ours." It is in this light that the power politics of Strauss and others seem strangely anachronistic.

Jewish Paganism

AFTER AUSCHWITZ. By RICHARD L. RUBENSTEIN. *Bobbs-Merrill. 287 pp. $5.95.*

THE RELIGIOUS IMAGINATION. By RICHARD L. RUBENSTEIN. *Bobbs-Merrill. 246 pp. $5.95.*

Reviewed by MARVIN FOX

GOD MAY be dead, but the Jewish people must live, although they are not a chosen people and there is nothing sacred about their existence. Jews are not commanded by God, since there is no God who commands, but Jewish morality must be preserved. Human life is essentially absurd. Thrown into our situation without purpose or reason, we must nevertheless struggle to fashion something meaningful out of ourselves and our own existence. Man is painfully alone, yet he can only live as part of a community. We come from nothing and we shall return to nothing, for only in death is there redemption and fulfillment. Life is nevertheless important and precious.

These are the main themes woven through the theological work of Richard L. Rubenstein in his two recently published volumes. Although they might appear at first glance to constitute nothing more than an exercise in mere contradiction or paradox, I believe that this is in fact not the case. Rubenstein is a thinker who is struggling earnestly with the perplexities of our age. He is not always convincing, and traditional Jewish theological positions can surely be defended against his strictures, but in the present discussion I should prefer to try to understand him, to see what sense can be made out of his various positions, and thus to come to terms with him in the full seriousness which his work deserves.

Moved by reflection on history and on his own experience, Rubenstein has found himself forced to abandon such staples of Jewish belief as the existence of a God who is transcendent, omnipotent, good, and wise; the doctrine of revelation which holds the Torah to have been given to Israel by God through Moses, the supreme prophet; the special role in history claimed for the Jews as the chosen people; and the hope for a final redemption of man. At the same time he values religion in general and Jewishness in particular. His task is to make a place for these, not along the optimistic lines which liberal Jewish religion has generally followed, but rather in a manner consistent with his pessimistic judgments of man and history.

The most extreme rejection of traditional theology emerges in Rubenstein's conception of the "death of God." What moves him to the denial of the Jewish God of

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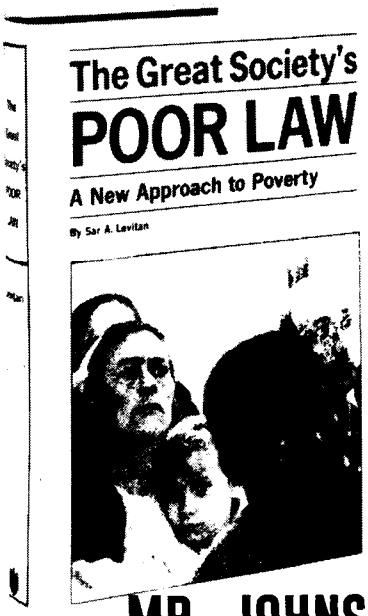
history is something very different from the concerns which resulted in Protestant radical theology. Rubenstein is so stunned by the facts of recent history that he feels forced to reject all claims that God is present in the world of human activity. In his view it is impossible to face honestly the agonizing truth of the Holocaust and continue to believe in an omnipotent and benevolent God. Auschwitz represents the watershed of traditional religious belief, and having lived through this ultimate expression of human cruelty and degradation, we can only deny the traditional God. It is not modern science with its built-in naturalistic bias which undermines faith, but rather the grim facts of our history.

Rubenstein reacts with understandable pain to the extreme case of the bestial destruction of European Jewry. Between the lines, however, it becomes clear that he is reacting less to Auschwitz as a unique event than to the classical problem of evil. "The real objections against a personal or theistic God," he writes, "come from the irreconcilability of the claim of God's perfection with the hideous human evil tolerated by such a God. . . . A God who tolerates the suffering of even one innocent child is either infinitely cruel or hopelessly indifferent." We see that one need not have the obscenity of Auschwitz before one's eyes in order to be moved to deny God. Human suffering of whatever dimensions, so long as it is unjust and unmerited, is sufficient to raise profound doubts about the existence of the God of our religious tradition.

RUBENSTEIN, of course, is not the first to have discovered the problem of evil, nor does he introduce any special new dimension into his discussion of that problem. If evil in the world counts decisively against belief in an omnipotent and good God, then the whole history of human suffering is one continuous witness to the nonexistence of such a God. Rubenstein knows this as well as anyone. Moreover, he undoubtedly knows all the standard countermoves made by theologians in defense of God. If all that were called for was polemic or debate, we could now proceed to pile up against Rubenstein the best of the arguments in favor of a personal God and the most skillful treatments of the problem of evil. But to deal with Rubenstein in this way would be a mistake, since it would miss the whole point of his work.

Let it be granted from the outset that no decent man should believe in and worship a God who is guilty of causing the unspeakable monstrosities which have been the bitter heritage of almost every age of human history. If God's omnipotence makes Him responsible for human suffering, as Rubenstein sometimes suggests, then we should revile Him and rebel against Him. Such a God is unworthy of man's loyalty, and Rubenstein is right in preferring to deny His very existence. But for this we do not need Auschwitz, since, as Rubenstein himself notes, the suffering of a single child is enough. Then what



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is he getting at? What does he see in the Holocaust which forces him beyond conventional discussions of the familiar theological paradoxes?

An answer can be found in the two books before us, though one wishes that it were clearer and more explicit. Auschwitz drove Rubenstein to deny God primarily because it convinced him that there is no real hope for man. The whole complex of events that is captured in the name "Auschwitz" points to the existential absurdity of the human situation, as Rubenstein sees it. In effect, he challenges us to make sense out of the combination of passive Jewish suffering which brought millions to the agony of unnatural death, plus the indescribable brutality of the Nazis and their helpers, aided by the callous indifference of the supposedly civilized world. Auschwitz refutes God not by adding one more decisive step to the classical theological debate, but by making clear the meaninglessness and the hopelessness of human existence.

For classical Judaism, as Rubenstein sees clearly, God is the ground of hope and the source of meaning. He recognizes that, "It would have been impossible for the rabbis to reject an omnipotent God and affirm an absurd universe. Theirs was not yet the time of the death of God. He who rejects God rejects hope." We, presumably, live in a time in which absurdity and darkness are so complete as to leave no room for the God of Israel. For Rubenstein, then, "Auschwitz" means simply the cataclysmic moment which robs man of all his comforting illusions, the moment in which man discovers that he stands alone. This is why he believes that our main concern must be with theological anthropology rather than with a theology of history. He looks in vain for God's presence in history, and having failed to find Him turns instead to man. But while the understanding of man in the Jewish tradition is such as to lead us back to God, Rubenstein will not allow such a move. Biblical and rabbinic man is more than just another animal. He is a creature whose uniqueness is expressed in the idea that he is created in the image of God. Jewish man has his ultimate meaning in the claim that he can and should seek to be God-like. Rubenstein denies all meta-historical meaning to man and seeks instead to fashion a human life which is sane and satisfying in its own terms.

THE NIETZSCHEAN motif is very strong in Rubenstein's thought. Denying meaning to history, he insists on a return to nature which will make history, like nature, cyclical, repetitive, and inherently senseless. Man should not be crushed by the lack of meaning in history, but should rather be challenged to create his own meaning. Nietzsche saw eternal natural recurrence not as a tragedy, but as a glorious opportunity for man to exalt himself. Only the weak, he thought, needed to be sustained by the belief that history moves toward its own proper fulfillment. Strong men would face the truth and stubbornly fashion their own world, their own values, their own structure of meaningful existence. Nietzsche's true superman is not, as the popular picture would have it, the great muscular blonde beast. His true superman is the philosopher, who is the strongest and most significant of men because he creates values, and by so doing stands as a challenge to *all* men to create their own values.

But it is in his radical departure from the Nietzschean theme that the depth of Rubenstein's Jewishness comes out. Granting that history is without meaning and that man must fashion his own world, Rubenstein does not conclude that we stand absolutely alone. Nietzsche's philosopher creates his world in solitude and by himself. The covenant which binds Israel to God, on the other hand, also binds the people together as a nation so that no Jew is ever an isolated individual totally detached from the community. Rubenstein may reject the traditional God of Israel and the notion of the covenant, but his Jewish sensitivity prevents him from rejecting the community of Israel. His picture of the Jew is not that of a solitary individual struggling to fashion his own special destiny and his own structure of values, but that of a member of an important and cherished historical community who finds the ground of his own special existence within the context of that community, its history and its destiny.

This is not to say that Rubenstein treats the Jewish community in a traditional way. He rejects the doctrine that the Jews are a chosen people and with it any claim for Jewish uniqueness or a special kind of peculiarly Jewish sacramental existence. Yet he values Jewishness for the special way in which it can form and structure his own life and for the ties it gives him to a great historic community:

> It is precisely because human existence is tragic, ultimately hopeless, and without meaning that we treasure our religious community. It is our community of ultimate concern. In it, we can and do share, in a depth dimension which no secular institution can match.

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> it continually reminds us of the community of experience, wisdom, insight, and common need which has linked the generations of Israel one to another. Certain behavior patterns are Jewish and we freely choose to live in a way which our ancestors have done, not because we have to, or because we are commanded to, but because our free understanding of our Jewish situation makes these choices more rewarding and meaningful than others.

Rubenstein understands religion as the way in which we share our hopeless predicament with a community, and as the way in which we celebrate and give significance to crucial and critical events in our lives.

JUST AS Rubenstein refuses to give up the Jewish people, so does he refuse to give up the Torah. In fact, not only does he consider Torah to be central, but he also insists on the holiness of the entire Torah, even those portions which many modern Jews find somewhat embarrassing in their primitiveness. We must not, however, confuse the position Rubenstein has taken with Jewish Orthodoxy. Obviously, since he has rejected the God of history, his regard for

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the Torah must rest on grounds very different from those of Jews who believe in revelation. Neither should we confuse his position with that of the Reconstructionists, in spite of their superficial similarities, and in spite of the fact that he expresses, at times, sympathy and appreciation for Reconstructionism.

For the Reconstructionists, since it is no longer possible to accept the Torah as divine revelation, we are obliged to judge the content of Torah by our own current intellectual and moral standards. Whatever does not measure up to those standards must clearly be rejected. Rubenstein, as much a contemporary man as anyone, is not troubled by the intellectual problems which disturb the liberal mind. His view of man and the world makes him open to all the possibilities of the Torah, since he recognizes that there are many ways in which a text can be meaningful and many dimensions of human experience to which it may speak. He has, to his credit, overcome the intellectually embarrassing stance of simple-minded literalism so typical of liberal theologians when they speak about the Torah. Whatever he may be unable to come to terms with in the Torah he freely rejects as an act of personal decision, but he does not confuse his own momentary situation with the ultimate truth. As the prime possession of the Jewish heritage the Torah is worthy of respect and care. One never knows which aspect of Torah may gain a new relevance as human circumstances provide us with changed perspectives and needs.

Rubenstein's "Jewish paganism," his concern that we accept our bodies and our physicality in a healthy way, his strong feeling for the importance of our attachment to the earth and to earthiness, constitute some of the distinctive elements in his approach to religion. There is here an atmosphere which could have no place in conventional versions of liberal Judaism, Reconstructionist or other. One example should suffice to make the point clear. Reconstructionism, like Conservative and Reform Judaism, finds the ancient Temple cult and animal sacrifice an expression of primitive religion which modern men can no longer accept. Each group has revised the traditional liturgy in such a way as to eliminate the prayers for the rebuilding of the Temple and the restoration of the sacrificial rites.

By contrast, Rubenstein considers the Temple ritual and animal sacrifices to be not an embarrassment, but a positive good. Life and death, blood and earth, are biological and psychological realities which man cannot escape. In Rubenstein's judgment it is both wise and healthy to have concrete direct experience of these inescapable dimensions of our existence. For this reason he shares the traditional Jewish view that the destruction of the Temple was a major calamity and that prayer is, at best, never a fully satisfactory substitute for the Temple ritual.

Similarly, Rubenstein finds the sacrificial rites psychologically valuable and morally healthy. It is

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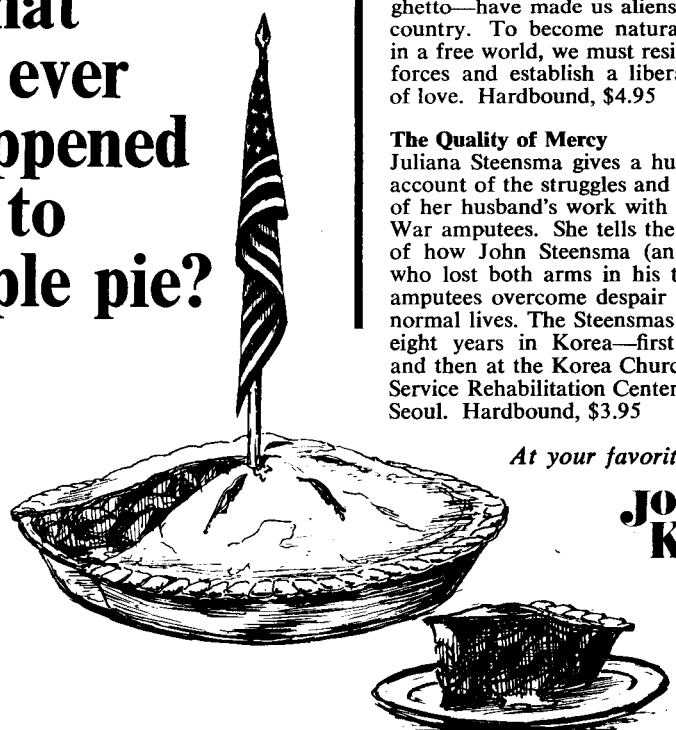

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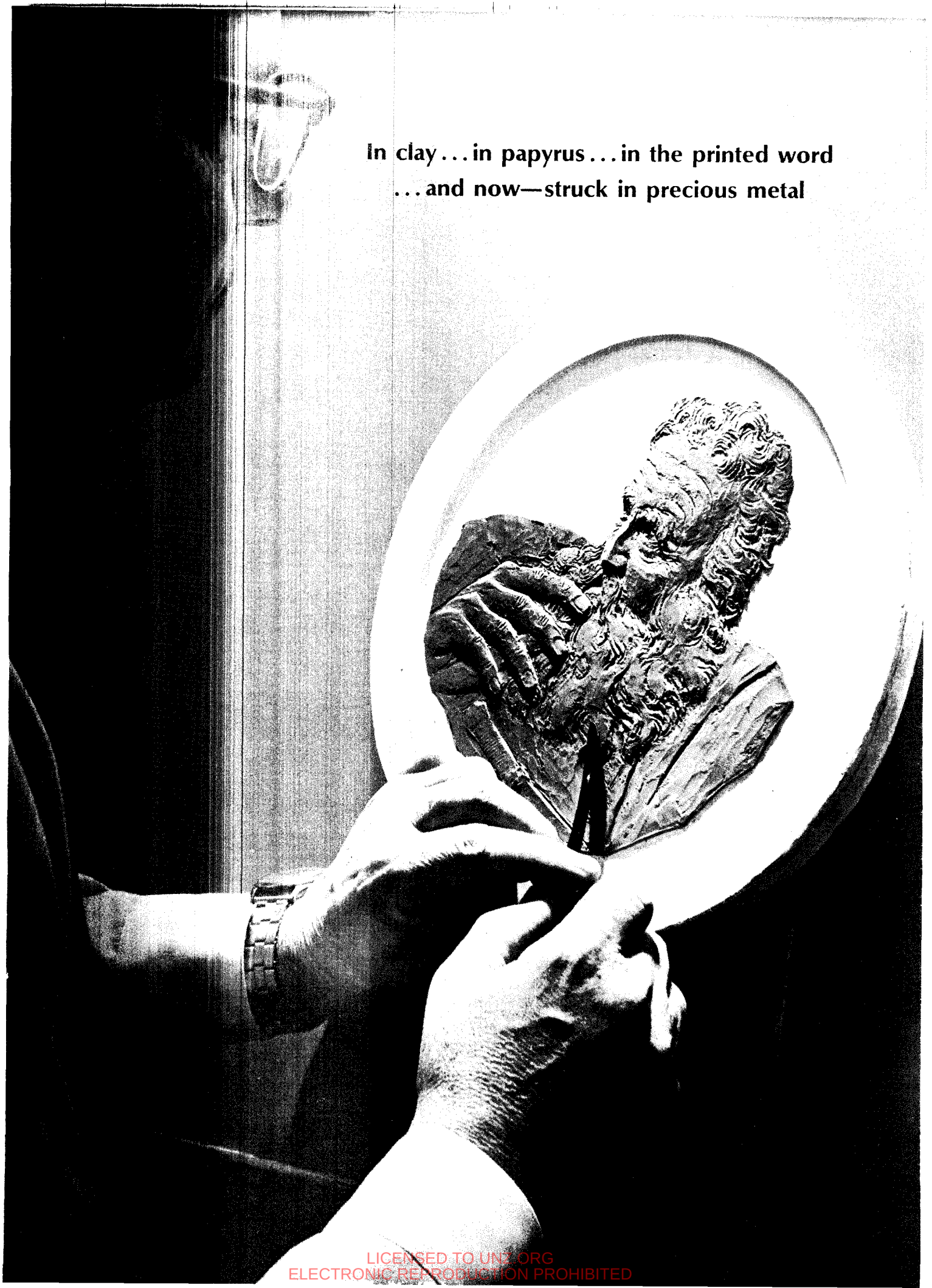

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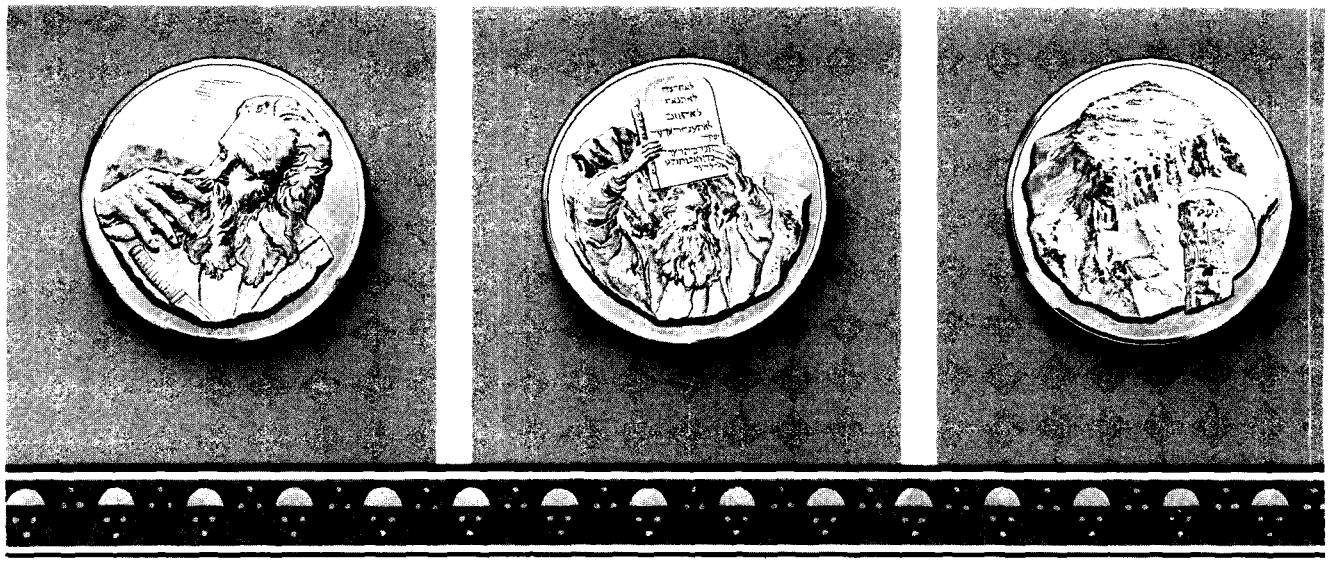

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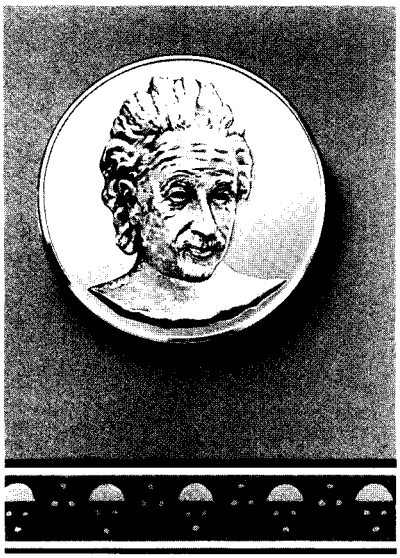

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not clear whether he believes that any such rites could conceivably be practiced by Jews today, but he refuses to apologize for them. In a special way, despite profound theological differences, he seems at this point closer to Orthodoxy than to liberal versions of Judaism, precisely because he is ready to accept the whole Torah as holy and is perfectly comfortable with it.

NEVERTHELESS, in the end, and despite moments of deep perception, Rubenstein's impressive attempt to provide for a living Judaism after having dispensed with the living God remains unconvincing. If it is true that Auschwitz must lead us to lose hope in man, and thus to deny God, then we have lost the essential foundation of classical Judaism. Attachment to the Jewish people, observance of the traditional forms, even the acknowledgment that all of the Torah is holy, are insufficient grounds for a viable Jewish existence. For unless we see ourselves as standing under God's judgment and bound by His commandments, the Torah cannot be truly holy; it becomes no more than a book to which the Jews have happened to give a central place in their lives—a book, moreover, which is not attuned to the moral and psychological predilections of every succeeding age. We can see the hazards of this line of thought in the very divergence that separates Rubenstein from other non-Orthodox Jewish thinkers over such a matter as sacrifices. Committed to a biopsychology which finds value in sacrificial rites, Rubenstein views them positively and sympathetically. A radically different psychology and a particular theory of moral progress forces other Jews to reject sacrifices as psychologically unhealthy and morally repugnant. In neither case does the teaching of Torah prevail simply because it is Torah. It is noteworthy in this regard that in the very sentences in which Rubenstein affirms the holiness of the entire Torah, he adds an escape clause that leaves him free to ignore whatever does not suit him.

Rubenstein notes: "The rabbis emphatically rejected the notion that they were free to determine appropriate behavior in pragmatic or utilitarian terms. They regarded independence of judgment before the demands of religious obligation as an example of extraordinary folly." But what happens to the religious structure of the rabbinic tradition when one insists, as Rubenstein does, that there is neither command nor commander, but only our free decision to redeem ourselves from the formless absurdity with which life is given to us by taking our stand inside the Jewish tradition? The answer is that the structure inevitably collapses, and in the process it can no longer serve even the limited purposes which Rubenstein hopes for it. He repeatedly points out the soundness of the widely held view that without God all things are permitted. He also notes the terrifying implications of such moral anarchy for human society. In fact, the worst brutalities of our age are an example of what is possible

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when men no longer acknowledge divine law. Rubenstein strives mightily to avert the danger by proposing a religion without God and a law which binds us though it is not a divine command:

> If we must live without God, religious law is more necessary for us than ever. Our temptation to anarchic omnipotence and the total indifference of the cosmos to our deeds call forth the need for a set of guidelines to enable us to apprehend the limits of appropriate behavior. Without God, we need law, tradition, and structure far more than ever.

But how are we to achieve a law which is binding, a tradition and structure to which we submit our lives, if there is no ground on which these can rest and no source which gives them authority over us? Only if we are prepared to argue, along Kantian lines, that the moral law is purely rational in character and binds us because we are rational beings do we have the possibility of a law which is both effective and autonomous. But there is no evidence at all that Rubenstein thinks of morality as based on a Kantian categorical imperative. A moral law which is neither divine nor rational is, in the last analysis, no law at all.

IN DENYING God, then, we not only lose the foundations of morality, we also lose the possibility of seeing human life as meaningful. Rubenstein puts it beautifully when he says that, "Of all the gifts the Aggadah bestowed upon the rabbinic Jew, it is likely that none was as precious as the gift of meaning." Now, Aggadah is based on a belief in a God who is present in history, a God who is concerned with man, who commands him and loves him. When we no longer find belief in such a God possible, we have lost every hope for meaningful existence. There may of course be a few rare individuals, Nietzschean supermen, who are capable of creating their own structure of meaning and value in a world which is essentially absurd. However, these highly gifted individuals do nothing to solve the problem of the vast majority of men. Most men cannot create their own values nor can they endow their lives with meaning. Neither can they live comfortably in a universe which is irrational and meaningless.

Though Rubenstein sees all this, he still holds that because "we are children of the secular city, traditional belief is impossible for most men." One suspects that "most men," even in the secular city, and despite the theologians, do in fact hold to fairly traditional beliefs. Perhaps they do so, while facing the counter-pressures of our age, precisely because they sense that to give up God is to give up meaning and to be plunged into hopeless absurdity. Against Rubenstein on the one hand, and the spokesman for liberal religion on the other, the healthy religious instincts of ordinary men may be the most effective of all arguments.

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THE AGE OF DISCONTINUITY. By PETER DRUCKER. *Harper & Row. 394 pp. $7.95.*

Reviewed by FRITZ F. HEIMANN

DISENCHANTMENT with large organizations has in recent times become a widespread social attitude. It is common to all points of the political spectrum from Left to Right, and it applies to all kinds of organizations: government agencies, corporations, universities, foundations, and labor unions. This general disenchantment represents a sharp change from earlier attitudes, which tended to vary according to political outlook. Liberals traditionally have been suspicious of large corporations, but they have been favorably inclined toward government agencies, universities, and labor unions; conservatives have also distinguished between "good" and "bad" organizations, but have generally reversed the labels of the liberals.

The change in attitude has come at the end of a period which has witnessed an immense scaling-up in the size of organizations. The elephantiasis of the federal bureaucracy needs little comment. Suffice it to note that the building in Washington which once housed the State Department, the War Department, and the Navy Department, now provides space for just a part of the White House staff. Its prior occupants have new quarters with many times the floor space of the entire Washington bureaucracy of the 1930's. Similar growth has taken place in the business world. Today, every one of the fourteen companies into which Rockefeller's Standard Oil Trust was divided is substantially larger than the undivided Trust of 1911. The largest university in 1914 had fewer than 5,000 students. Today there are several universities with more than 100,000 students, and a university of 20,000 students is considered medium size.

WHAT ARE WE to do about this? The prescription of the hippies—eliminating all large organizations—is of course totally unrealistic. We have long since passed the point of no return, and although it is true that large organizations bear a heavy responsibility for the massive problems facing our society, it does not appear that we can solve those problems without them. If, on the other hand, we recognize that an increasing majority of all educated people will spend their lives working in large organizations, it then becomes essential that we develop an understanding of what has in fact already become a "society of organizations."

A major contribution toward such an understanding is provided by Peter Drucker's *The Age of Discontinuity*. Drucker, who teaches at New York University's Graduate School of Business, has written extensively in the fields of business management, economics, and public policy. In *The Age of Discontinuity*, his tenth book, he discusses, among other things, changes in technology and their implications for the economy, and the effects on society of the massive shift from manual work to knowledge work. But the analysis of the "society of organizations" is to me the most stimulating part of the book.

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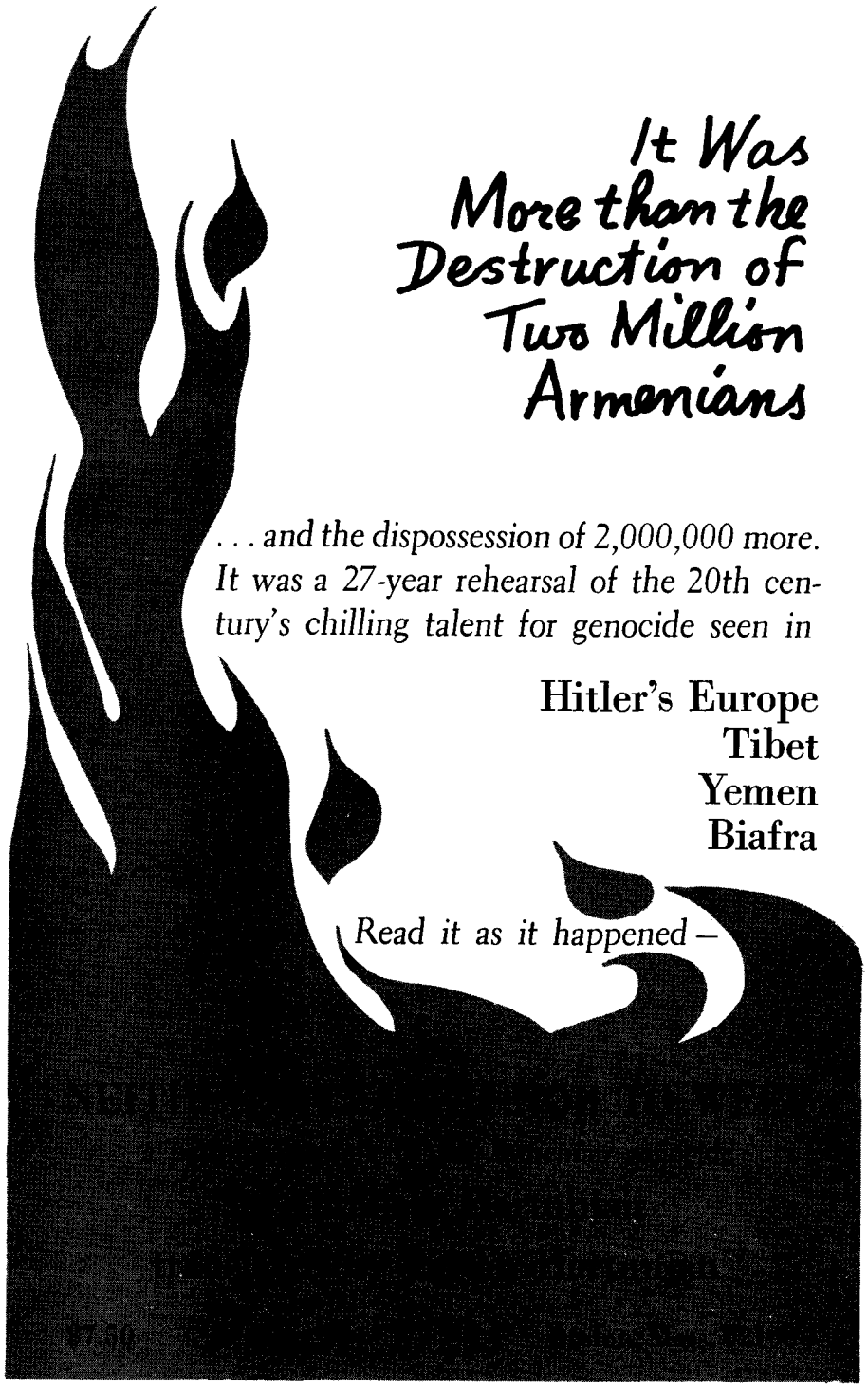
The unifying theme of *The Age of Discontinuity* is that, in each of the fields Drucker discusses, the real world has moved out from under the intellectual superstructure which had been built up to describe it. We are confronted by sharp "discontinuities" between the patterns and trends of the past fifty years and those of the future. These discontinuities make it impossible to predict the future, because prediction inevitably involves a forward projection of current trends. Yet, Drucker maintains, unless we understand these discontinuities we will not be able to solve the problems which must be solved to make our society livable.

One of the most serious of Drucker's "discontinuities" is that which exists between our individualistic social and political theories and the reality of a society dominated by large organizations. The relationships between the organization and the individual have now become at least as important as the relationship between the state and the individual, on which our political theory and our legal system have largely focused. What Drucker seeks to provide, then, is a theory which will adequately describe the new society of organizations.

Drucker's central concept is that the society of organizations is pluralistic. There is no hierarchy among organizations, nor is there one master organization around which the others revolve. Furthermore, all large organizations have a substantial measure of autonomy in the conduct of their affairs. One distinctive characteristic of our society is that it is composed of organizations performing limited, specialized functions. As a result, and despite their internal autonomy, all organizations are in very large measure interdependent. This helps explain why among organizations there is more worry about "communications" than there is about precedence, a dominant concern in hierarchical societies.

Drucker maintains that in a pluralistic system of specialized organizations, each organization should be confined to its "legitimate" role. Accordingly, he pro-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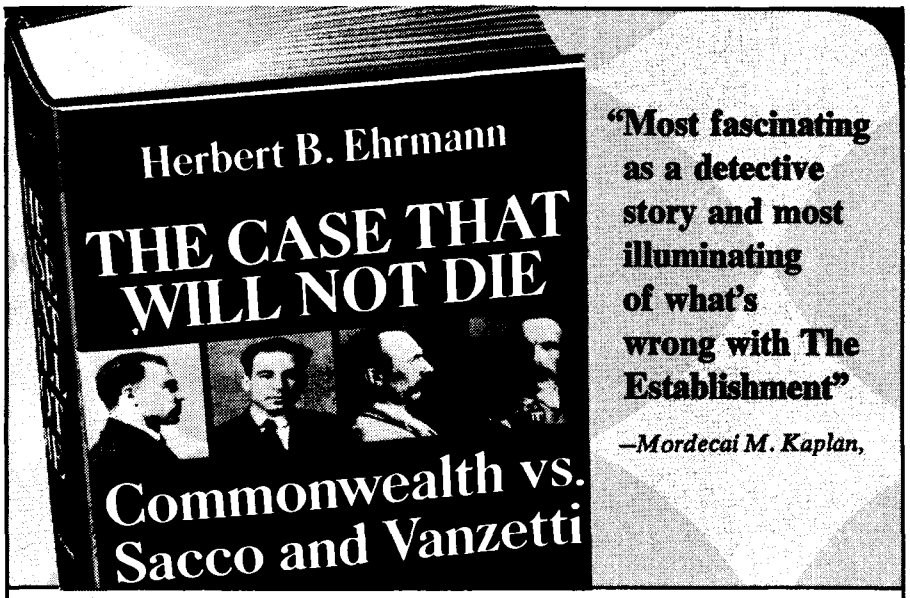
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vides a much more restricted role for government than that sanctioned by current practice, or by current theory. Unlike John Kenneth Galbraith who, in *The New Industrial State,* foresees a gradual blending together of the State and the corporations, with the corporations becoming "part of the larger administrative complex associated with the State," Drucker argues that our society is so complex, and the powers of bureaucratic control so limited, that a centralized system is simply unworkable.

DRUCKER REGARDS the general disenchantment with government —the largest organization of all— as one of the major political events of recent times, far more serious as a phenomenon than disenchantment with other organizations. Government, after all, stands in much greater need of public confidence; without it, no democratic administration can govern effectively.

In Drucker's view, government in this century has proved it is capable of doing only two things with great effectiveness: it can wage war and it can inflate the currency. Other things it can promise but only rarely accomplish. Thus, its role in running industrial enterprises has been uniformly depressing under all political or economic systems. Neither has government been successful as a planner, whether in Communist countries, under British socialism, or in de Gaulle's capitalist France.

But the greatest disappointment has been the fiasco of the welfare state. Here as elsewhere disenchantment results from the failure of great expectations to materialize: "We expected miracles—and that always produces disillusionment." In reality, "the welfare state turns out at best to be just another big insurance company, as exciting, as creative, and as inspiring as insurance companies tend to be." The new and happy society which the liberal proponents of the welfare state had promised is nowhere to be found. Instead, "modern government has become ungovernable. There is no government today that can still

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claim control of its bureaucracy and of its various agencies."

For Drucker, the solution to the crisis of confidence in government lies in limiting its scope and in permitting other institutions to perform those functions which they are better equipped to handle. The principal purpose of government is to make fundamental decisions and to focus the energies of society. Drucker argues that this task, which is properly one of "governing," is incompatible with the task of "doing." In his scheme, the government would become "the conductor in the orchestra of institutions," relying on the members of the orchestra to play their own instruments. This is not to say that Drucker advocates a return to laissez faire. He recognizes the need for a strong and active government, but believes that its true strength lies in the recognition of its limitations and hence in the avoidance of activities for which it is not suited.

Among other things, government is limited by the rigid controls with which it must operate in order to diminish the very real threat of corruption. "Any government that is not 'a government of forms' will deteriorate rapidly into a mutual looting society." Similarly, the elaborate safeguards which have been built to protect the civil service from political interference, safeguards which in Drucker's view are necessary, inevitably serve to protect bureaucrats from demands for high performance and also act as a barrier against innovation and flexibility. Private institutions, on the other hand, can operate with much more flexible personnel policies. This is a crucial point because the ability to attract creative and innovative people and retain them for the extended periods necessary to carry out complex programs is of great importance to the success of an organization.

One might add here that our political system, with its checks and balances, makes it difficult for government agencies to achieve genuine autonomy. There are a few exceptions, like the CIA and the FBI, but these agencies reflect unusual circumstances in which the normal system of checks and

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balances has broken down. Generally it is much harder for a government agency than for a private institution to achieve effective autonomy in its decision-making process. The influence of Congressional committees, the requirements of an annual appropriations process, the political processes by which top officers are appointed, and the high rate of turnover in top personnel—all serve to limit the degree of autonomy which a government agency can develop, and consequently, as Galbraith convincingly demonstrates in *The New Industrial State,* the ability to reach sound decisions in specialized fields.

THE INABILITY to stop doing anything is, according to Drucker, "the central degenerative disease of government and a major reason why government today is sick." Organizations invariably take on a life of their own, independent of whatever function they may originally have been designed to serve. Our farm program, the selective service system, and the welfare system are cited by Drucker as examples. He notes that the American welfare program was in large measure set up during the Depression to provide temporary relief for urban people who in ordinary times would have been economically viable. Welfare was relatively successful in performing that particular task. However, the same programs, continued long after the Depression ended, proved incapable of coping with the far different problems presented by the migration of several million Southern Negroes and Puerto Ricans who had never learned to function successfully in an urban environment. It might well have been easier to come to grips with the new problems if the task had not been automatically assumed by old organizations with strong commitments to old methods.

The most important and usually the most neglected task of an organization is to decide which activities should be abandoned; the inherent organizational inertia always pushes for continuing what is already being done. Equally difficult are decisions concerning areas of concentration. All organizations (in this the administration of Lyndon Johnson was no exception) try to avoid hard priority decisions by striving for a "consensus"—which generally means doing a little bit of everything, with the predictable result that not enough gets done in any single area.

While these difficulties also afflict other organizations, Drucker believes that government agencies are the worst beset, and that at least on a comparative basis, business does reasonably well. The fact that businesses must publish a profit and loss statement and must remain competitive, provides a discipline which government and the universities lack. Most important of all, corporations are the only large institutions which society will let disappear. Bankruptcy and merger are accepted in a way that the disappearance of a government agency or a university or a hospital is not. For all these reasons, Drucker would argue for reducing the scope of government and increasing the role of business in those innovative activities in which false starts are inevitable and in which errors must be recognized and eliminated as promptly as possible.

AS I NOTED earlier, Drucker believes that in a pluralistic society of organizations, every organization, no matter what its legal character or ownership, must be regarded as a special-purpose tool. He further maintains that each institution should be confined to its proper task, or mission. Only those actions which are necessary for the discharge of that special purpose are considered by him to be legitimate. Thus, business should stick to providing economic goods and services, universities to advancing and teaching knowledge, government to governing.

Drucker recognizes of course that the trend for several decades has been precisely in the opposite direction. He notes that there has been an extensive "intertwining of functions" among different forms of organizations. Private corporations perform defense production for the armed services, and the government, in turn, provides research-and-development funds both to business and to the universities. In addition, the government carries on a large variety of "business" activities, while the universities perform consulting and all kinds of other work for both business and the government, and have become prolific breeders of new businesses. Meanwhile, corporations have moved into the field of education, and private insurance carriers run the Medicare program for the government. Drucker observes that these are "*liaisons dangereuses,*" the implications of which have never been adequately thought through.

I should say at this point that I am quite skeptical of Drucker's theory regarding the "legitimate" scope of organizations. To begin with, the definitional problems underlying any classification of functions as "legitimate" or "illegitimate" seem to be almost insuperable. For example, is it appropriate for Stanford University to operate a high energy physics laboratory for the Atomic Energy Commission? Drucker's answer would probably be yes, because the laboratory "advances knowledge." However, on the other side of San Francisco Bay, the University of California runs another laboratory for the AEC. That laboratory is concerned with the development of nuclear weapons. Is that an appropriate function for a university? A good many students at Berkeley, among others, would probably say no. Yet the management and technical knowledge required to run the two laboratories may well be very similar.

THE SAME difficulties arise in applying Drucker's classification to corporate activities. In the field of education, for example, he indicates that he approves of the Job Corps, the program by which OEO hired private corporations to run training programs for high-school dropouts. However, most vocational educators have regarded industrial companies as unqualified to run Job Corps centers. On what basis should we decide whether this is a "legitimate" activity for a corporation? Does it make a difference if the corporation professes some more or less fuzzy notion of "social responsibility"? Or if the

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profit margin is attractive? Or if the experience is considered valuable for future business activities? Or if the corporation's officers happened to be responsive to high-level arm twisting by Lyndon Johnson or Sargent Shriver?

My point is that far too many complex considerations are involved to permit the establishment of "legitimate" spheres for different types of organizations. The key to the survival of a pluralistic system is that non-governmental organizations retain their autonomy, and nothing is more essential to autonomy than the authority to decide which fields to enter. In the corporate world, outside of some regulated industries, there is rarely any meaningful "charter" or similar constitutional document to determine the "legitimate" scope of an organization. What happens in reality is that organizations learn by trial and error what they can and cannot do. Self-imposed limitations are of course essential, but they can hardly be deemed to confer legitimacy, as Drucker appears to assume they do. Of course, during boom periods corporations may well develop illusions about how many fields they can enter successfully, as is witnessed by the current mania for conglomerate mergers. Such illusions can only be corrected by events; I can see no effective mechanism by which limitations on private organizations could be imposed from outside.

When we rely instead on an essentially pragmatic test to decide what organizations will be permitted to do, then the question of "legitimacy" comes to depend on whether an organization is capable of performing the job which society expects to be done in a particular field. This test places a fairly high premium on not undertaking too many activities in which the organization's competence is questionable. The argument against corporations taking on "social responsibilities" is not that this is illegitimate on some conceptual basis, but rather that our current social problems are extraordinarily difficult, and it is doubtful whether corporations would be any more successful in wrestling with them than the government has been.

Indeed, the same concern about financial risks which makes corporations more efficient than governmental institutions is rather a limiting factor when it comes to satisfying social needs. For if a particular "need" cannot be organized in a manner which will allow the corporation, over a reasonable period of time, to cover its costs, then it is not an activity which business can perform. It *is* true that more can be done by way of providing incentives for the private sector. However, industry's inability to accept open-ended liability places real limits on industrial entrepreneurship in fields like social welfare where the risks are ill-defined. Thus, while it would no doubt be prudent for the government to heed Drucker's advice and avoid programs which are likely to be unsuccessful, at times it may have no other choice. If there is a genuine need for action, and the task cannot be formulated in such a manner that other institutions would be willing to perform it, the government must inevitably be the agency of last resort.

WHILE DRUCKER makes some compelling arguments for cutting down on the activities performed by the federal government, I question whether his distinction between "governing" and "performing" is practical. For example, strategic studies of the type performed by the RAND Corporation are presumably of the essence of "governing," while the furnishing of electricity in the Tennessee Valley is clearly "performing." The decision to set up the RAND Corporation resulted from the fact that the Defense Department's personnel and pay structure could not attract and retain the kind of expertise that was needed for highly advanced analyses. On equally pragmatic grounds it was clear in the 1930's that government action was necessary to bring electric power into the Tennessee Valley. Once again the conceptual lines are much too tenuous to make it sensible to limit our flexibility in shaping practical solutions.

During the past twenty years there has been considerable progress in permitting other organizations to carry out broad aspects of government programs. The Atomic Energy Commission, under its first chairman, David Lilienthal, decided to rely heavily on industrial contractors rather than develop greater "in-house" capabilities. The Defense Department and, to a lesser extent, the Space Agency, have done the same. This is in my view a healthy development, for there is substantially greater flexibility in the use of contractors than there is in the use of government-owned and operated facilities. The private contractor can for example recruit people without regard to civil-service regulations. But more important, the government has much greater freedom to discontinue contractor programs. Notwithstanding the widespread public concern about the power of the military-industrial complex, there is little question that it is far easier for the government to cut off a contractor than to shut down a government facility. Whereas the government's "in-house" operations usually have a presumption of permanence, government contracts by their nature run for limited periods and terminate unless extended.

BECAUSE NO clear conceptual lines can be drawn between the activities which the government itself will perform and those which can be assigned to other institutions, it seems to me that the "intertwining" of functions which Drucker deplores is inevitable. I also think it is often quite productive, since the chances of finding new solutions to highly complex problems are likely to be improved if different types of organizations, with different backgrounds and disciplines, are able to work in the same area. Unlike Drucker, I see no threat to society in letting organizations stray beyond their accustomed fields. On the contrary, I see real danger in trying to set up a system of "legitimate" spheres of activity, especially since the most important decisions will generally have to be made at a time of considerable uncertainty about the right answer. To my mind, a society of organizations can remain genuinely pluralistic only insofar as its constituent members are free to pursue the various paths of their own choosing.

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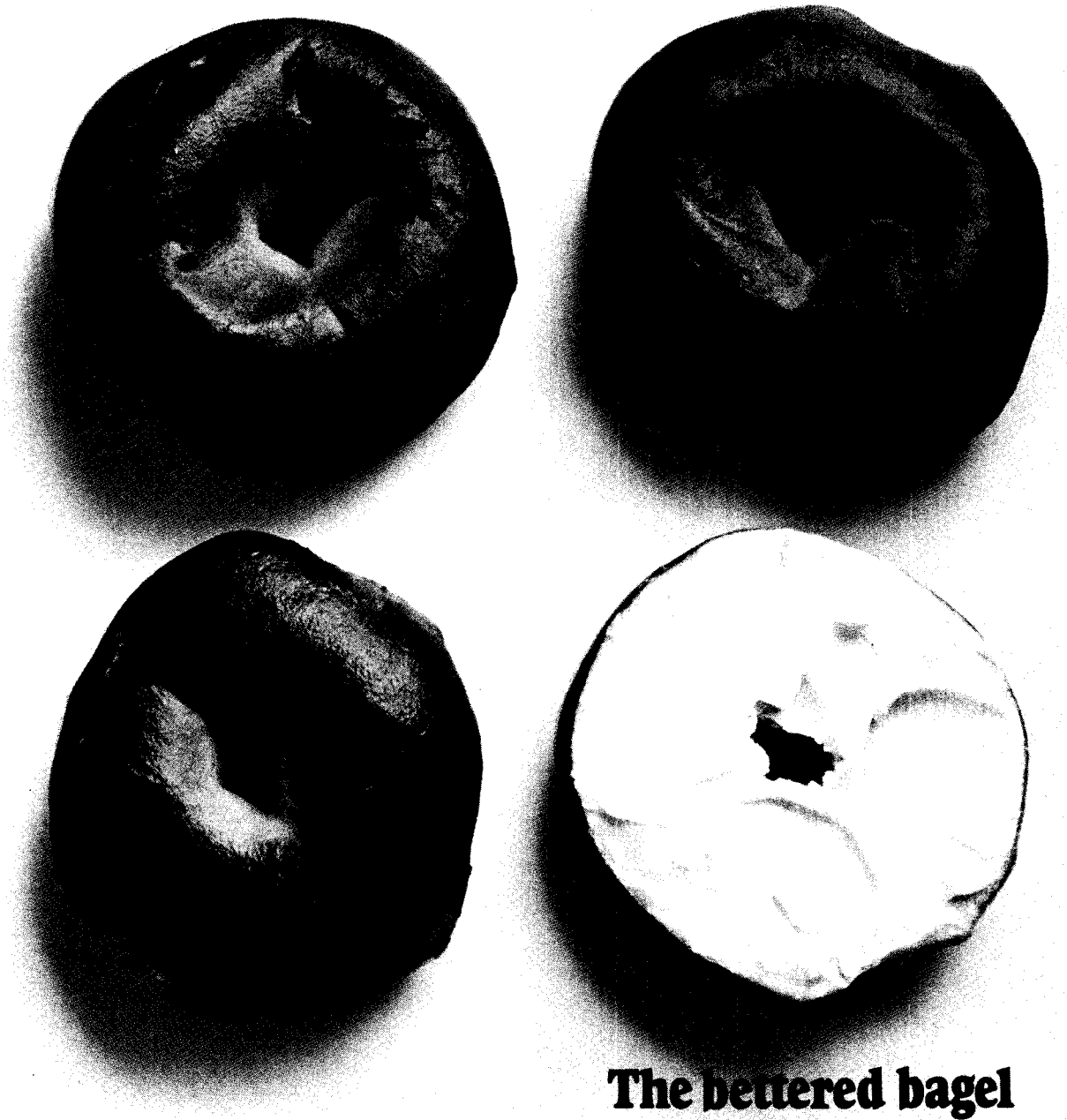

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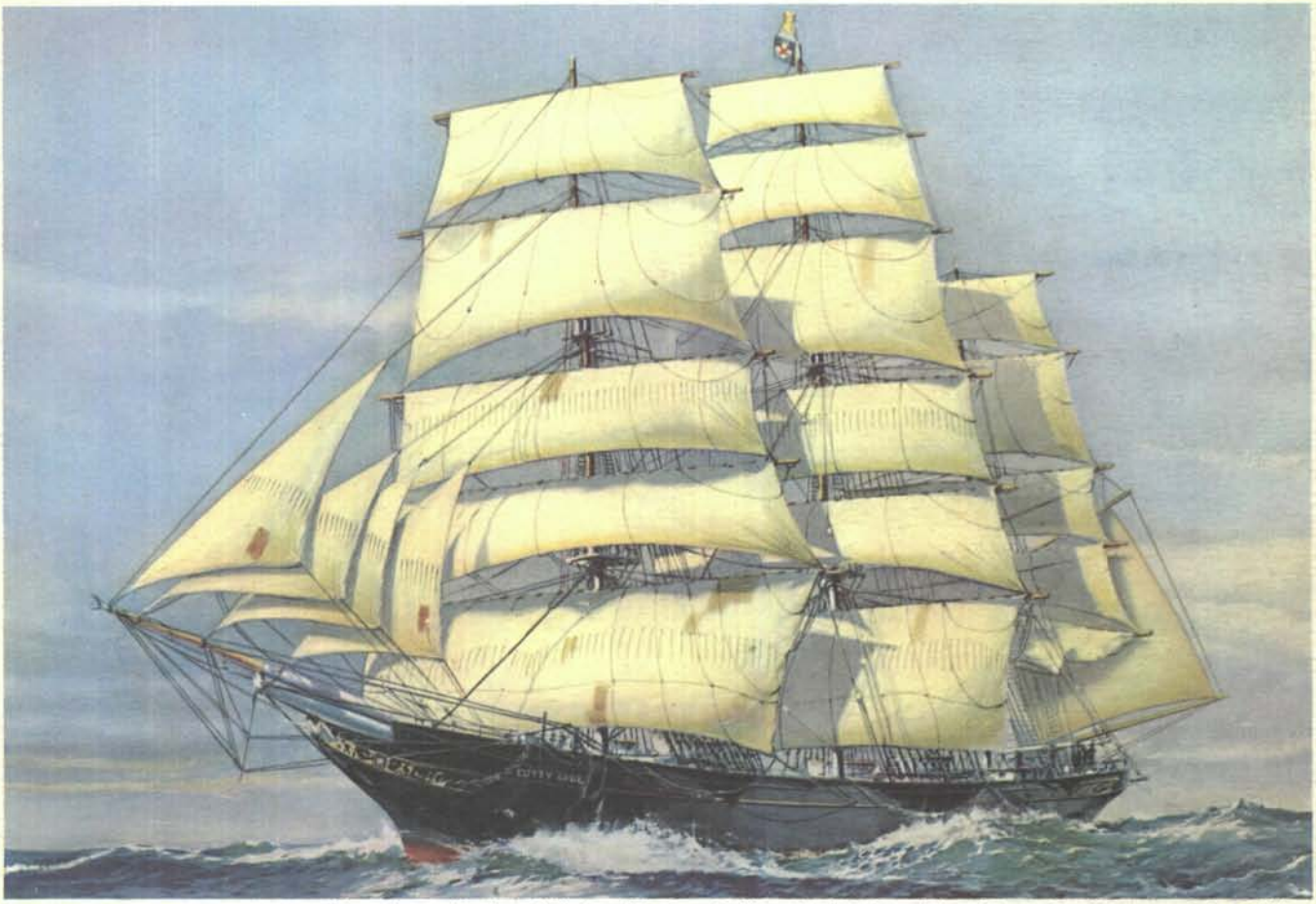

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